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ABSTRACT

This report begins with a general appraisal of school desegregation in the Southern region and concludes with a discussion by four black high school students who explain in specific terms what their first year of desegregated schooling has meant to them. Interposed are four community studies and an assessment of the continuing segregated academy movement, including court action and other crucial issues arising from the experiences of the selected communities. While many problems remain, the six individual contributors to the study agree that the important and hopeful factor was that the students were there and were involved in determining their own destiny. (Author/DM)

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THE SOUTH AND HER CHILDREN:

School Desegregation 1970-1971

Southern Regional Council Inc.
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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years the Southern Regional Council has issued periodic reports on school desegregation. These reports have, properly, analyzed federal governmental policy, court decisions, local administrative responses and the statistical results of those actions.

In the summer of 1970, as we planned this year's report, we sensed that the 1970-71 school year would be the most crucial one since 1954. More importantly, we agreed that now was the time to determine what was happening to education, to the children.

As a measure of our priorities, we assigned six staff members to the study. Each is identified in the report. The work was coordinated by our Research Department; the full report was edited by Robert E. Anderson, Jr. A number of other persons on the staff and outside the agency assisted with the research or read portions of the manuscript. We are grateful to them all for sharing with us the sense of the crucial importance of public education in the region at this time.

The report begins with a general appraisal of school desegregation in the region and concludes with a discussion by four black high school students who explain in concrete, specific terms what their first year of desegregated schooling has meant to them. In between are four community studies and an assessment of the continuing segregation academy movement. The four communities each reflect a different facet of the larger story. Three of the cities—Athens, Charlotte, and Mobile—were before the Supreme Court in October, 1970, and it seemed wise to report in detail on the crucial issues arising from their experience.

The report reveals, I believe, that those who say that segregation problems are solved direct attention away from the very real ones that remain, and support away from those trying to solve them. Those who, on the other hand, say all is lost have much the same effect, and encourage further retreat of the federal government and opinion leaders from the national commitment to equal education.

Emerging from this report is one highly significant point. Six sensitive and competent individuals went their own ways, essentially, to produce sections of the total. Some surveyed better situations, some the worst. Each independently concluded that the important and hopeful factor was that the students were there and involved in determining their own destiny.

This is, of course, an unfinished report. And, tragically, it probably cannot be finished for a number of years. Just as we have lost so much precious time and done so much human damage by stupidity, viciousness, and ignorance, so we seem destined to do more. Yet, we must educate our young. We must have faith in them. Perhaps, now, at least we have begun to do both.

Paul Anthony
Executive Director

THE REGION IN PERSPECTIVE

By Paul M. Gaston

I: The Numbers Game

The 1970 school year has been widely celebrated as a watershed in the long struggle for the desegregation of southern schools: sixteen years after the Supreme Court declared segregation to be unconstitutional white and black children of the region seemed finally to be going to school together.

Early in the fall, HEW Secretary Elliot Richardson announced that all but 76 of the South's some 2,700 schools districts—97% of the total —were desegregated, and that 90.5% of the region's white and black students were attending schools in desegregated districts.[1] President Nixon boasted of the achievement, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of his most articulate counselors, fairly glowed with optimism. In a New York *Times* guest column, Moynihan reported that black children attending schools in desegregated districts had soared from 4.3% in 1967 and 6.1% in 1968 to 90% in 1970. It was with good reason, he believed, that the Southern Regional Council, in 1968, had issued a critical report entitled *Lawlessness and Disorder: Fourteen Years of Failure in Southern School Desegregation.*[2] Two years later it was a different world. When he took leave of federal service to return to Harvard, Moynihan appeared to be saying that no such report would ever be required again, for "that great symbol of racial segregation, the dual school system in the South, virtually intact two years ago, has quietly and finally been dismantled."[3]

To most southern veterans of the school desegregation struggle, the Administration appeared to be playing a deceptive game of numbers. To report desegregation progress in terms of *districts* said to be in compliance resulted in high figures but said nothing about the desegregation of *schools.* It obscured the fact that the pattern of segregation within so-called desegregated districts was widespread, and reinforced the fear that

[1] HEW News, October 22, 1970. This news release understated the number of public school students in the South by more than a million. (In this report, as in HEW figures, "South" means the eleven states of the old Confederacy.)

[2] New York *Times,* September 22, 1970. Moynihan pointedly endorsed SRC's 1968 report, which was critical of the enforcement policies of the Johnson Administration, but was silent about its 1969 report—*The Federal Retreat in School Desegregation*—which was critical of the Nixon Administration.

[3] New York *Times,* December 23, 1970.

the Administration's retreat from school desegregation, begun in 1969, was in 1970 going to be frozen into a policy that would condone extensive segregation as a permanent condition in the region.

Not until mid-January—months after the original data had made their impact—did HEW release figures concerning the actual extent of school desegregation. According to these preliminary estimates, which may not be accurate but are the only comprehensive ones available, 38.1% of southern black students are enrolled in schools with a predominantly white student body; 20.4% attend predominantly black schools ranging from 50% to 79.9% black; 23.1% attend desegregated schools in which the enrollment is 80% or more black; and 18.4% attend all-black schools.[4]

These figures do in fact reflect a significant increase in school desegregation. It would be fair to say that, for the first time, school desegregation in one degree or another is the rule rather than the exception for the children of the South. This is a far cry, however, from the final dismantling of the dual system; and the mere numbers which the Administration celebrates scarcely justify Secretary Richardson's boast that they "show clearly and dramatically that unprecedented progress has been made in school desegregation since 1968."[5] Senator Walter F. Mondale, chairman of the Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, put the matter more accurately. "We have begun to tear down the outward manifestations of legal segregation," he wrote in December, "but we have not achieved real desegregation or quality education on the basis of a mutual respect."[6]

II: Federal Policy and National Commitment

The destruction of the "outward manifestations of legal segregation," while accelerated this year, has proceeded unevenly and largely within restrictive bounds set by the Administration. Most of the momentum for the move, moreover, came from the Supreme Court's *Alexander* decision (October, 1969)—a decision opposed by the Administration. In that case, the Court set aside its own "deliberate speed" doctrine, replacing it with a mandate to desegregate forthwith. The Administration, already deep in its policy of enforcement slowdown, was faced in 1970 with the task of finding a viable means of complying with the Court's decisions without abandoning its cautious and restricted approach.

In March the President announced his policy. On the one hand, he would have the government prosecute deliberate and official acts of segre-

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[4] HEW News, January 14, 1971. Comparative percentages of the extent of desegregation for 1970 (estimated) and 1968 are as follows:

	1970	*1968*
Blacks as a percentage of school population	27.2%	26.6%
Blacks in majority white schools	38.1	18.4
Blacks in schools 50%-79.9% black	20.4	2.8
Blacks in schools 80%-99.9% black	23.1	10.8
Blacks in all-black schools	18.4	68.0

[5] HEW News, January 14, 1971.

[6] Walter F. Mondale, "Think of These Children," *New Republic*, December 26, 1970, p. 15.

gation. On the other, while recognizing the legitimacy of busing as a means of implementing various assignment plans, he would support the neighborhood school as essential to public education and he would oppose the transportation of students beyond what he called normal geographic school zones to achieve the disestablishment of the dual system.

Officials of HEW and the Justice Department operated within this framework during the summer, exerting pressure on districts still not in compliance, and multidistrict suits were brought in Mississippi and Texas. Meanwhile, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Athens, Georgia, each in different ways, implemented plans that were at odds with the Nixon doctrine. In both places the old dual system was in fact disestablished: through a combination of zoning and pairing, and with the extensive use of free transportation, unitary systems were established in which there were no white schools, no black schools, just schools. Both plans were taken on appeal to the Supreme Court. In Mobile, a plan which was closer to the Nixon ideal—and one which retained segregated schools—was likewise appealed to the Court. All three cases were argued in late October and the Court's decision was expected to resolve at least some of the argument over the extent to which segregated schools are permissible in "unitary" districts.

While the Court studied the cases before it, the Administration continued its attempt to persuade the American public not only that desegregation was operating smoothly and largely without violence, but that the major objectives of the *Brown* decision were on the verge of being realized in the South. Whether white Americans would agree that what Mr. Moynihan once called "benign neglect" should now be prescribed for the racial and school problems of the South, they appeared increasingly receptive to the government's arguments. Obsessed with inflation, unemployment, pollution of the air and water, drug abuse, a baffling and irreverent youth culture—not to mention crime in the streets, revolt on the campus, pornography at the movies, and the war in Vietnam—most white Americans in 1970 seemed eager to believe that school desegregation in the South was one thing that could be written off their list of concerns.

According to a Harris poll conducted at the end of the year, Americans did not consider school desegregation to be among the "top problems" with which Congress should be concerned—despite the fact that the Mondale Committee had by then compiled an impressive amount of evidence underscoring the need for Congressional action. Education ranked eighth in the list of priorities (behind student unrest) and racial problems fell in tenth place.[7] The President reflected this national complacency when he ignored desegregation in his assessment of the state of the union.

Shifting national concerns have combined with other developments to blunt the drive for genuine integration. For one thing, the long-standing alliance between civil rights forces and the federal government, weakened in the last years of the Johnson Administration and shattered in the first year of the Nixon Administration, has shown no signs of coming to life

[7] Harris Survey, Washington *Post*, January 4, 1971.

again. As one veteran civil rights leader remarked at a strategy meeting in the fall, "you used to be able to telephone Washington; at least somebody would listen sympathetically. Now, there's nobody to talk to." Within the government, to make matters worse, officials charged with civil rights enforcement resigned to protest the lack of leadership and commitment from the President, and many of their replacements lack both the experience and the will to pursue desegregation effectively.[8]

Added to the diminished influence of civil rights leaders and the resignation of their friends from HEW and the Justice Department is the crystallization of another development that threatens to give intellectual and moral respectability to the dissipation of the desegregation effort. For sometime now—especially since racial problems have rent the North as well as the South—white Northern liberals, once sympathetic to school desegregation, have begun to have second thoughts. In student radical circles, where the crusade for integration was once a passionate concern, the issue has been shelved along with other *passé* delusions of the liberal establishment. Reinforcing the will to retreat of both groups, many outspoken blacks (primarily Northern) now add to their devastating critique of white-dominated desegregation the cry for black control of community schools as the only realistic alternative to the white man's sham pretensions to equal treatment. Continued failure in the South could scarcely help but strengthen the hand of those whose doubt and disillusionment is already high.

III: The "Unitary" System

It was in this atmosphere of administrative caution and national uncertainty that the new era of the unitary school system spread across the South in 1970. In *Green v. New Kent County, Virginia* (1968), the Supreme Court defined a unitary school system as one "without a 'white' school and a 'Negro' school, but just schools." It is this kind of system that allegedly exists in 97% of the southern school districts.

Granted the vagueness of the definition of a unitary system, one could hardly imagine an interpretation that would accommodate the kinds of situations that abound in the region. Not only do segregated schools exist on a wide scale within many "unitary" districts, but even within desegregated schools methods both ingenious and disingenuous have been used to separate blacks from whites and to place both psychological and physical burdens on black students. Classroom segregation, for example, was discovered in 273 of 467 districts monitored in September for one major study of compliance in the region.[9] The separation was sometimes arranged without apology or justification, but more frquently as the con-

[8] In an attempt to deny the significance of the resignations, then Assistant Attorney General William Ruckelhaus told an audience at Mount Holyoke College that the resignations of nineteen civil rights division lawyers between January and June could be regarded as "normal attrition." Washington *Post*, October 21, 1970.

[9] American Friends Service Committee; Delta Ministry of the National Council of Churches; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Lawyers Constitutional Defense Committee; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; and Washington Research Project, *The Status of School Desegregation in the South, 1970*, p. 31.

sequence of a greatly expanded "ability tracking" system, a method of assignment that has been widely perverted to perpetuate segregation.

The purpose of the *Brown* decision was to prohibit the unconstitutional practice of school segregation and to eliminate the kinds of discrimination that did irreparable harm to Negro students. Under the unitary system presently in operation, desegregation has all to frequently substituted new forms to perpetuate old injustices.

For example, unitary systems have frequently been created by closing down (or downgrading) formerly all-black schools and shifting the black students to the "white" schools. In the process, the blacks are the ones who take the longest bus rides, and when they get to school they find that "unitary" means preservation of the white school, with its traditions and symbols (and often its old school officers), and obliteration of the distinctive features of the black school. Discrimination in school activities further impresses on blacks the attitude that they are pawns in a white man's game.

Compounding the hurt, black students find that the authority figures who once gave them pride and a sense of security—generally their principals, but also many of their teachers and coaches—have been dismissed or demoted, and they face in their new schools a white authority structure rendered even more insidious by the proliferation of "assistant" principals who once were persons of commanding authority. As one black group put it, "Many students merely find themselves in a new world with no Black anchors to hang onto, as they try to adjust. They are faced with new standards, new teachers, new rules, new curriculums."[10] In those cases in which whites are transferred to formerly all-black schools, fumigation teams have sometimes preceded them, acting out an ancient white prejudice, now referred to cynically as "deniggerizing" the old school. These indignities, and others that will be discussed subsequently, proceed from a combination of mindlessness, sometimes well-intentioned, and deeply embedded racism, often only vaguely sensed.

If the federal government anticipated praise for facilitating this kind of "unitary system," and if it felt that its "unprecedented progress" would prevent the appearance of harsh judgments of its performance, it must have been sorely disappointed, for this has been a banner year for critical evaluations.

In a searing report published in December, the Washington Research Project and five associated groups concluded that, overall, "the progress of desegregation is in imminent danger of failure if new and stronger policies are not implemented at the federal level."[11] The Washington *Post* called the report "cheerless" and observed that "one can hardly escape astonishment at the meannesses and cruelties revealed by the study."[12] The Administration's Emergency School Assistance Program, hastily devised to underwrite programs aimed at making desegregation effective,

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[10]The Educational Resources Center, *Racism and the Desegregating Process: A Mississippi Study* (December, 1970), p. 21.
[11]*Status of School Desegregation*, p. 1.
[12]Washington *Post*, December 26, 1970.

was faulted by the same group. HEW was accused, among other things, of "acquiescence in fraud perpetrated by local school officials."[13]

Two additional studies—one by the National Education Association and one by the Race Relations Information Center—revealed in detail the shocking plight of black teachers and principals. The NEA, focusing on Mississippi and Louisiana, reported "massive displacement of black educators" and quoted with approval the judgment of Rims Barber of the Delta Ministry that

> Black teachers are being emasculated and stripped of their standing before their own communities. Teachers with years of experience are being assigned as teacher aides or assistants to white teachers. New job categories are being created; black Mississippians will explain to you that "Co-principal is short for colored principal."[14]

The RRIC special report surveyed the entire region, concluding that "the apparent effect of desegregation on black teachers across the South this year has been more negative than positive." Rather than helping to expand the professional opportunities of black teachers, school desegregation is contracting them. Hundreds of black teachers "have been demoted, dismissed outright, denied new contracts or pressured into resigning, and the teachers hired to replace them include fewer and fewer blacks."[15]

IV: Resistance and Oppression

Writing last summer, Paul Rilling, the former southeastern regional civil rights director of HEW, said that "in the last analysis, the results in 1970-71 will depend on the posture of the federal government." Like his superior, Leon Panetta, Mr. Rilling had resigned to protest the weakening of the federal will to enforce desegregation. Further progress was dependent on the federal government, Rilling declared, because "sweeping changes will not come voluntarily in the South in 1970, any more than in other years."[16]

There have been (as will be seen later in this report) many remarkable changes, some instituted voluntarily. Of more than symbolic significance, for example, one thinks of Yolanda King, whose father once struggled to explain to her why he could not take her to Fun Town in Atlanta, now president of the junior class at the predominantly white Henry Grady High School; or, of Virginia Holton, whose father, the Governor of Virginia, could have sent her elsewhere, attending overwhelmingly black John F. Kennedy High School, and becoming a cheerleader.

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[13] *The Emergency School Assistance Program: An Evaluation,* p. 61. According to another critic, "the $75 million in emergency school funds . . . was intended to be used and was used mostly as a straight payoff for their minimal compliance with the law. President Nixon's personal order was to 'get that money out there' and it was gotten 'out there,' as often as not in flagrant disregard of the nominal requirement that school districts receiving it abandon or correct any and all forms of racial discrimination in the schools." John Osborne, "Call it Desegregation," *New Republic,* January 30, 1971, p. 5.

[14] National Education Association, *Report of Task Force III—School Desegregation: Louisiana and Mississippi* (November, 1970), p. 5.

[15] Robert W. Hooker, *Displacement of Black Teachers in the Eleven Southern States* (Nashville: Race Relations Information Center, December, 1970), p. 1.

[16] *South Today,* July-August, 1970, p. 6.

But the unfortunate truth is that, given ample opportunity by federal enforcement policies, too many southern school leaders not only failed to institute "sweeping changes" but showed instead that they were still able both to frustrate the intent of federal law and damage the welfare of the children in their charge.

The frustration of court orders and HEW-approved plans was widespread. Governor Holton tried to set a good example by sending his daughter to a predominantly black school, but other leaders were defiant. George Wallace advised Mobilians to defy the law by placing their children in schools of their choice; Lester Maddox told Georgians to exercise "freedom-of-choice," whatever the courts might have ordered; and John Bell Williams, Governor of Mississippi, both counseled resistance and dramatized his personal opposition to desegregation by putting his children in private school.

The examples set by these and other unreconstructed leaders were taken to heart by thousands of private citizens and hundreds of public officials; and they found numerous ways of preventing enforcement of the law. In Mobile, for example, more than a thousand children turned up at schools to which they were not assigned. William B. Crane, chairman of the Board of School Commissioners, gave them moral encouragement by describing the court-ordered plan as "asinine." It was made by federal officials, he remarked, "and they can enforce it."[17]

Elsewhere, in less well-publicized incidents, white parents adopted all sorts of strategies to keep their children out of the newly desegregated schools. In some districts parents falsified their addresses to get their children preferred assignments. For example, a Florida school board put nine agents to work to track down parents said by the superintendent to be "lying and cheating to circumvent the court order."[18] In other areas, such as Hartsville, South Carolina, and Birmingham, Alabama, school officials appeared to raise no objection to illegal transfers. U. W. Clemon, a Legal Defense Fund attorney in Birmingham, claimed that "10,000 white students in Jefferson County alone are openly attending classes in schools where they were not assigned in violation of the court's desegregation order."[19]

Added to these evasions of the law and the insidious forms of classroom segregation discussed earlier, the 1970-71 school year has been characterized by a disturbing increase of numerous forms of in-school discrimination. Almost no form of discrimination that one can imagine has been left untried. The most common have been the exclusion of black students from school organizations, the selection of all-white homecoming courts, and the use of symbols and songs ("Rebel" and "Dixie") reminiscent of a racist tradition.

Tensions produced by in-school discrimination have caused most of the confrontations and violence accompanying the expansion of desegrega-

[17]New York *Times*, September 10, 1970; Washington *Post*, September 10, 1970.
[18]Miami *Herald*, September 18, 1970.
[19]New York *Times*, September 14, 1970; Los Angeles *Times*, October 8, 1970.

tion. The "Dixie" issue, which has wracked schools in all parts of the region, is an instructive example.

At Butler High School, in Huntsville, Alabama, black students (who numbered 302 of the total enrollment of 2,581) objected to the playing of "Dixie" at football games, the use of "Rebels" as the team name, and the display of the Confederate battle flag as the school flag. At a pre-game pep rally in the fall, black students walked out when "Dixie" was played and the Confederate flag waved; some returned later and tore down the flag. In the days that followed, black students—joined by high school and college students from the area—staged a march, 113 black Butler High students were suspended, students engaged police in a fight, mace was used to suppress the protestors, eight black students were arrested, and at one point a planeload of riot equipment was flown in from Chicago to be available to the police.

During the controversy the school superintendent agreed to consider the banning of "Dixie" as well as the display of the Confederate flag. White parents resented the move, insisted that no consideration be given the request of the black students, and in the midst of one mass meeting they all joined in a chorus of "Dixie." When the next football game was played few black student spectators showed up, and several black team members stayed away. The band held back until the fourth quarter when it responded to shouts of "we want Dixie," playing the tune while Confederate banners waved.[20]

"Victory celebrations" of this sort say much about the problems of racial adjustment in the desegregated schools, and failure to see them for what they are accounts for much of the anguish that schools, and their students, have experienced. In South Carolina, for example, the Columbia superintendent noted that the band leaders themselves had decided not to use Dixie. "Of course, to me," he said in an interview, "Dixie is a very beautiful tune. . . . But there is other beautiful music that can be substituted for it. We feel that inconsequential things like that should be avoided if there is any danger of causing conflict."[21]

The belief that quarrels over such issues as "Dixie" are essentially "inconsequential" is apparently held by many white schoolmen, not to mention those farther removed from the scene. Dr. Cyril B. Busbee, State Superintendent of Education in South Carolina, illustrated this attitude in a recent speech before the state's high school principals. Dwelling largely on disciplinary complications brought about by the change to a unitary system, he said that a "school with inadequate discipline cannot conduct a productive program," and then deplored "unwarranted and unnecessary bickering over issues that were essentially trivial . . . such matters as school colors and mascots."[22]

In what used to be ordinary times, when student bodies were more-or-less homogeneous, agitation over such matters as school songs and colors

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[20]Birmingham *News*, October 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 1970.
[21]Columbia (S. C.), *The State*, August 30, 1970.
[22]Columbia (S. C.) *The State*, January 9, 1971.

no doubt could be regarded as "inconsequential" and "trivial." The point, of course, is that these are not ordinary times and student bodies are not homogeneous. To most black students, the strains of "Dixie" are laden with contempt for their dignity. Whites who insist on retaining the song are seen as insensitive and naive, at best; implacable enemies, at worst.

V: Violence and Intimidation

Much of the violence that has taken place this fall stems from the wounds to black sensitivity inflicted by schoolmen either unable or unwilling to come to terms with the racism in their institutions. Consider, for example, the case of Earle, Arkansas.

Earle is a small farming community of 3,000, some twenty miles from Memphis, in the Mississippi Delta. Approximately 60% of the population is black. The mayor, alderman, police chief, and school board members are all white. Earle's schools were desegregated at the beginning of the fall term. According to a special report prepared by the Arkansas Council on Human Relations:

> The mascot of the black school was dropped in favor of the mascot symbol of the white school. The principals of the formerly all black schools became assistant principals of the elementary school and the combined junior-senior high school. The black basketball coach became an assistant coach, although he was the senior coach in the district, and was deprived of his duties of teaching science. White cheerleaders had already been chosen by the students at Earle High, and no effort was made to add any blacks to their number.

Over the summer black leaders who anticipated many of these conditions asked for changes. When school opened, their worst fears were confirmed. In the elementary school:

> No white children were in a class in which they were in a minority; testimony indicated that in the whole system, with the exception of a remedial reading class, no black teachers taught any white children; all of the new teachers hired since last May have been white; rolls were called on a segregated basis—whites first, then blacks; classes were largely segregated except for some elective courses.

According to the report, School Superintendent Sam Bratten explained in Federal Court that ability testing accounted for classroom segregation, but then admitted "that exceptions were made to assign white students to all-white classes whether or not their ability scores justified it." He then explained that "in his judgment and that of the School Board, 'the parents would prefer the present arrangement.' A further question revealed that he was referring to white parents."

The black students in Earle protested against these conditions. Some three hundred walked out of class and began a march to the superintendent's office, where they intended to register their complaints in person. They never reached the office. They were told to disperse by the county sheriff; they obeyed his order. That night some thirty of the marchers, some as young as thirteen, were arrested for violating an anti-picketing ordinance passed during the summer. Arrested on a Monday night, they

were taken to the county jail, twenty miles distant in Marion, where they were held until Thursday when they were tried and convicted.

The abuse of the black students of Earle, and the swift crushing of their protest, exacerbated more general community racial tensions and sparked an adult march that resulted in beatings and more arrests. Federal court hearings led to an order for slight modifications of in-school discrimination practices, but many of the black students never returned to school. According to a count in November, some 390 of them were attending the newly organized "Soul Institute," an all-black "private academy," reported to be "beset by lack of funds, teachers, and materials."[23]

The confrontation at Earle is part of a story that has chapters in all parts of the South. A few examples can only suggest the kinds of abuse, violence, and intimidation that have been visited upon black students—the price they have paid for the "unitary" school districts in too many parts of the region.

—Black students in Coffeeville, Mississippi, began a boycott of their school when term opened. Nearly 1,100 students stayed out protesting a court-approved plan of segregation-by-sex. Student picketers were arrested, but District Judge William Keady subsequently ordered that the segregation-by-sex plan he had earlier approved be abandoned at the end of the semester. "It is now clear," he wrote, that "there is a strong unmistakable feeling in the black community in Coffeeville that this court put a stamp on a plan which calls for racial discrimination."[24]

—In East Tallahatchie, Mississippi, 125 black students were arrested on charges of trespassing and disturbing the peace. Protesting against the elimination of some school activities, a busing system that placed a greater burden on them than on white students, and against other actions of the school board, they were incarcerated in the maximum security camp at Parchman penitentiary because the county jail could not accommodate them.[25]

—In Bogalusa, Louisiana, 600 students released pent-up racial tension in a two-hour fight after a football game. School was subsequently closed while blacks picketed with signs reading "Integration on the Outside, Segregation on the Inside." [26]

—In Jacksonville, Florida, forty black students picketed in protest against being transferred from an accredited all-black school, which was closed, to the unaccredited Robert E. Lee High School. Some objected to attending a school named after a "white racist." The superintendent informed them that their former school was being closed under court order.[27]

—A demonstration of black students at South Iredell High School, in

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[23]Arkansas Council on Human Relations, *Earle Report,* November 24, 1970.
[24]Jackson *Daily News,* September 30, October 11, 1970. Several hundred black students remained out of school throughout the first semester.
[25]Greenville (Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times,* October 21, 22, 1970; Jackson *Daily News,* October 22, 1970.
[26]New Orleans *Times-Picayune,* September 15, 18, 1970; New York *Times,* September 15, 1970.
[27]Miami *Herald,* September 9, 1970.

North Carolina, protesting the absence of black students from the 15-girl homecoming court, led to 120 suspensions ("School Suspends Rebellious Blacks"), 22 arrests, and cancellation of the homecoming festivities.[28] In the neighboring county, at South Rowan High School, the decision of school authorities to ban "Dixie" as the fight song for the "Rebels" led to a walkout and protest by white students, supported by their parents. No whites were arrested and the ban on "Dixie" was lifted, at least for the time being.[29]

The repression and violence that have spread with school desegregation this year—of which these few examples are barely suggestive—are symptomatic of a malaise of frightening potential. As one SRC school desegregation field worker observed in late February, "the handwriting is on the wall." Student patience with administrative blundering and rigidity is wearing increasingly thin, and there has been no diminution of racial confrontations. Indeed, each week brings news of situations that should stand as warnings of the dangers that lie ahead.

At this critical juncture, responsible authorities must be awakened to the need for imaginative and constructive leadership. Unless there is a swift and substantial redirection of school policies, the frustrations and bitterness that have been building up throughout the year will almost surely erupt in the spring. Elections for next year's class officers, tensions caused by school proms, a more crowded social schedule, the warm weather, and the realization that a year is passing without fundamental problems being resolved—all of these are likely to result in protests and a round of repressive measures unmatched by what has happened already.

VI: Change and Hope

Studies of school desegregation have recorded and lamented the meanness and intransigence of the South and have faulted federal policy ever since the *Brown* decision, almost seventeen years ago. Events in the present year require continuation of that unhappy tradition; and the growing national feeling that the battle is no longer of much importance adds to its urgency. On the other hand, the changes that have taken place in the schools—some of them quite extraordinary—must be acknowledged, and the issues and challenges that lie ahead defined.

At one level, the kind of change that the South is witnessing can be measured by the grudging adjustment of whites who now accept desegregation as an inevitable fact of life. In Perry County, Mississippi, for example, a white construction worker was waiting nervously for his daughter at the end of her first day in the newly desegregated school. "If anything happens to my girl," he remarked, "if she's insulted by a nigra, I'll come over here and knock hell out of Adcox." Mr. Adcox, the principal, was pleased by the news: "That's great; that's progress," he observed. "Last year, the same man said he would shoot me if we desegregated the

[28]Raleigh *News & Observer,* September 29, 30, 1970; Charlotte *Observer,* September 29, 30; October 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 1970.
[29]Raleigh *News and Observer,* September 24, 25, 26; October 23, 1970; Charlotte *Observer,* September 24, 25, 26, 28, 29; October 1, 7, 1970.

school."[30]

Acceptance of the inevitable is variously manifested. It may appear in the pomposity of the bitter newspaper editor who scores HEW bureaucrats and rails at the extending tentacles of what he calls the "federal octopus," but takes a kind of perverse pride in boasting that the "success with which schools are being desegregated . . . is due to the determination of most Southerners, black and white, to comply with the law—regardless of how distasteful or unwise they might regard it."[31] Sometimes it is reflected in the way youngsters influence their parents, as in the case of the white high school student who told his parents he preferred the formerly all-black Booker T. Washington High School to the segregated academy they wanted him to attend. "We don't have any bad feelings about it," the mother confessed. "We're all resigned to it now."[32] And in other instances it will be revealed by the decision of a small town mayor, such as Lamar Munroe of Quincy, Florida, to spurn the white flight movement and send his daughter to the newly desegregated junior high school where blacks outnumber whites four-to-one.[33]

In some communities the ominous transfer of whites to the segregation academies has either slowed down or been reversed. In Port Allen, Louisiana, for example, a boycott begun last year cut white enrollment from 2,300 to 400. In September the number was up to 1,100, and the private schools in the area had dropped from seven to two. Similar results have been reported for nearby Evangeline and St. Landry parishes.[34]

In Indianola, Mississippi, desegregation in January 1970 emptied the public schools of their 991 white students. In September, some 200 of them returned, responding to the urgings of many white community leaders as well as to the financial pinch of private education. Pleading for support of those who would join the 2,500 blacks, a young coed from the town wrote that for the returning whites "going to public school here in Indianola requires a particular kind of bravery: the courage to live a life contrary to the established life style of their peer group."[35]

It is true that the segregation academy movement has expanded this year, with enrollment in private segregated schools up from 400,000 last spring to somewhere between 450,000 and 500,000 this year. Slightly more than 5% of the region's white students attend private segregated schools. Apart from the pernicious anti-democratic spirit encouraged by it, the movement is dangerous primarily because it threatens to create virtually all-black public school systems—poorly supported by public funds—in isolated and easily forgotten areas. Prince Edward County, Virginia, where the academy movement began, has never recovered from the white flight, and the danger lies in the multiplication, entrenchment, and acceptance of more Prince Edwards.

On the other hand, instances of white return to the public schools, such

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[30]Washington *Post,* August 25, 1970.
[31]Columbia (S. C.) *The State,* August 29, 1970.
[32]Columbia (S. C.) *The State,* September 1, 1970.
[33]Atlanta *Journal and Constitution,* October 18, 1970.
[34]Washington *Post,* December 26, 1970.
[35]Greenville (Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times,* September 6, 1970.

as those cited above, add force to the argument that the movement will not be a pervasive one, even in majority black areas. Perhaps more important, these examples fit into the larger pattern of the growing acceptance of desegregation as the norm for southern education generally. According to a recent Harris poll, Southerners are almost evenly divided on the question of whether the Supreme Court's *Alexander* decision, requiring desegregation without further delay, should be approved.[36]

At still another level, the change in the South can be seen in the slow and uneven remaking of southern power structures, and in the increased importance of the black vote and of black elected officials, including school board members. Seen in regional perspective, black influence on school boards is slight, but there already are examples of the differences that representation can make. In Wabbaseka, Arkansas, for example, black students launched a school boycott in the fall, protesting—among other things—the downgrading and dismissal of black personnel. Negotiations were at a standstill. The shift in power on the school board from white to black in December made it possible to deal directly with the issues.[37]

Grudging acceptance by the white majority and increasing black political power have helped to stiffen the will and enlarge the influence of hundreds of citizens groups working, with varying degrees of understanding, to make desegregation the agent of positive change. In Durham, North Carolina, a civic group called Women In Action To Prevent Violence And Its Causes worked feverishly through the summer to prepare the community to accept a new desegregation plan. After the first three weeks of school, the Legal Defense Fund attorney who had guided the suit against the city praised the successful implementation of the plan.[38] Civic groups like the one in Durham have been a part of school desegregation history since the days of "massive resistance" in the late 'fifties. In 1970, however, they appeared to have greater opportunities than ever before.

Likewise, the potential for good will that has always existed in the South has had a greater freedom to become a reality: as the fact of desegregation becomes more firmly established, the fetters that bound otherwise friendly and decent people have been loosened. Far too few have been emancipated from their fears and suspicions, but there are those who have responded positively and who stand as examples of what must happen in the region. More black and white parents than ever before—in PTA meetings, at athletic events, and in other school and community activities—exchange views frankly, come to know each other as people rather than as stereotypes, and forge a bond out of their common concern for the welfare and education of their children.

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[36]According to the poll, 42% approve; 43% disapprove; and 15% are unsure. Washington *Post,* December 29, 1970. According to a Gallup poll taken last spring, only one white parent in six offered objection to sending his child to a school in which Negroes are enrolled; six out of ten objected in 1963. On the other hand, 69% objected to sending their children to schools where Negroes are in the majority, a decline from 86% who objected in 1963. New York *Times,* May 3, 1970.

[37]Little Rock *Arkansas Gazette,* December 17, 1970.

[38]Raleigh *News & Observer,* September 20, 1970.

VII: The Students and the Future

In some ways the most important development in school desegregation this year is the significant role students are assuming, and for that reason widespread awareness of the contributions they are capable of making in the future is badly needed. Until very recently, school desegregation was largely a matter for adults—adults who fought court battles, waged political contests, and quarreled over school assignment plans. For the most part, students responded, working out their own private adjustments to new situations. Now, however, there is a difference. Not only are most students in desegregated schools—a fact which in itself alters the situation—but the very newness of the experience permits them to bring a freshness to their situations that sets them apart from adults. This change has occurred, moreover, at a time when youth all over the country are increasingly aware of themselves as a force in their own right, capable of making their own decisions. The fortuitous coincidence of these two developments may yet turn out to be the most hopeful aspect of future school desegregation history.

To give encouragement and provide resources for constructive student activities, the Southern Regional Council's School Desegregation Project, launched early in the fall, began to work with college students in the region, promoting discussions between them and high school students. Pilot projects in Mississippi and Georgia along with numerous conferences of high school students have convincingly demonstrated the sharp awareness of young people, and have underscored their sense that adults have too frequently failed to understand the real meaning and the real challenge of desegregation.

It is, of course, a commonplace to say that the younger generation may solve the problems that have defeated their elders; and younger generations have a long history of turning out to be quite as blind and bigoted as their predecessors. Mindful of this caveat, though, it is nonetheless difficult to suppress optimism over some of the insights youth are bringing to the desegregation issue and to delay any longer stressing the urgent need for significant programs to support their efforts. It hardly needs to be added that imaginative and socially conscious students are in the minority, any more than it is necessary to labor the point that instances of true integration are too few. The point, of course, is that one learns from examples of wisdom and humanity (perhaps more than from recitations of mindlessness and maliciousness); and that in such examples one can see the way the future must and may be shaped.

When classes began last fall at John F. Kennedy High School in Richmond, Virginia, the enrollment was 90% black. Gregory Thomas, heading a welcoming committee of black students, turned to one of the nervous new white students. "We want to make you feel at home here," he said. "This is your school, too."[39] At another school in Richmond a youngster remarked that "the majority of whites that attend seem to accept the fact

[39]New York *Times*, September 1, 1970.

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that the integrated system will educate us in more than one way."[40]

Both of these students were part of a pattern understood by a black principal in Charlotte who told an SRC reporter that "children are coming up in a brand new world." In Beaufort, South Carolina, an SRC reporter concluded that "despite the struggles, bitterness and concern of an older generation, integration has produced a new breed of student who is fighting for a flexible and innovative school system. . . ." A white high school student in Columbia, South Carolina, in a report for the School Desegregation Project, writes that black and white parents alike filled their children with apprehension during the summer before desegregation. "These attitudes of the older generation created a negative situation before the students even met," he observes, but even so he discovered that 54% of the white students and 64% of the black students in his school favored the change to complete desegregation.

In his recent study of the crisis in American education, Charles Silberman writes that schools fail to serve the real needs of students "less because of maliciousness than because of mindlessness." Like Procrustes, "stretching his guests or cutting off their limbs to make them fit the standard-sized bed his inn provided," he writes, "educators and scholars, frequently with the best of intentions, have operated on the assumption that children should be cut out or stretched or otherwise 'adjusted' to fit the schools, rather than adjusting the schools to fit the children. And most of us have tended to accept this without question."[41]

More than anything else, students today appear to be challenging the Procrustean habit of mind that determines the character of their schools. Black students who demonstrate against "Dixie" refuse to be squeezed into the bed of rebel patriotism; white students who upbraid their parents for imposing on them the racial shibboleths of another generation have outgrown the confining dimensions of the bed of white supremacy. Black and white students alike, in increasing numbers, are seeing the wisdom in the remark of a black student who told an SRC reporter in Athens that "Things won't get better until blacks and whites get to know each other as friends. That's what it takes."

Short of open and warm interracial friendship—which for most students is still something for the future—the region needs imaginative programs that will promote greater communication and mutual respect. It also desperately needs to remove the sources of tension that produce violence and repression. These objectives can only be realized by rejecting the rigidity of the Procrustean mold; by recognizing that new situations demand new solutions. Among several examples, the story of Southern Nash Senior High School, in Stanhope, North Carolina, can serve as an instructive case study.

In the midst of what many once called "Klan Country," Southern Nash was desegregated in 1969 with a white-black ratio of 60-40. Most of the

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[40]Richmond *News Leader*, September 1, 1970.
[41]Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 81.

students came from poor families, and few were without racial prejudices of one sort or another. With poor leadership, a nasty situation could easily have developed. It didn't. The principal appointed two teachers—one black, one white—to serve as co-sponsors of the Student Cooperative Association, the student council. Sensitive and imaginative men, they saw immediately the need to scrap the old system. "Total integration had given Southern Nash a completely new situation," one of them has written, "so we felt the need to devise a wholly new student council." Although they later confessed to several anxious moments, the faculty sponsors put most of the responsibility of creating, and then running, the new student government on the students themselves.

At the outset the students saw that the principle of "majority rule"—however admirable it might be in theory—would work disaster in the early stages of desegregation. They got unanimous support for the principle of equality of representation and succeeded in creating a system that earned the pride and support of the students. Crises over such issues as the election of homecoming courts, the choice of cheerleaders, and the election of student delegates to a state conference were resolved smoothly, with final votes on critical questions of principle often unanimous.

In time the test came for majority voting. The occasion was the election of five delegates to a state conference. The choice was to be made by the student assembly. Louis Low, the white faculty co-sponsor, describes what happened:

> The assembly, which consisted of 23 whites and 17 blacks, did not want to establish any racial quotas for choosing its five delegates to the convention. I wondered if the whites would finally vote down the blacks!
>
> Looking over to Pulley [Herbert Pulley, the black co-sponsor of the student association], I saw that he shared my concern. Pulley . . . suggested to me that we remain silent and let the assembly proceed. The bridge must inevitably be crossed when the students would vote without any racial quotas and choose simply on the basis of merit.
>
> We crossed our fingers while the assembly voted. The ballots were counted—three whites and two blacks were elected. Pulley and I breathed a sigh of relief.

Looking back on the experiences of the first year, Low confessed that "we did not achieve perfect racial harmony. . . . But, on the other hand, we did attain an acceptance of integration and a willingness to work together for common interests." Most of the credit, he felt, was due the students.

The foundations laid in that first year were built on in the 1970-71 session. The appraisal half way through the year was an encouraging one: "We still have a long way to go at Southern Nash, but I think we have clearly demonstrated that in the proper environment with proper spirit, integration—'Southern style'—will certainly work."[42]

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[42]Louis Gregory Low, "Integration 'Southern Style,'" Raleigh *News & Observer*, January 3, 1971.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA:

"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM"

By Pat Watters

I: See the bus.

Charlotte, North Carolina, allowed itself in 1970 to become a symbol and perhaps a scapegoat in the national hysteria over "busing" as a means of achieving school desegregation. With a federal court order for immediate, extensive cross-city busing extant in Charlotte, the President of the United States himself lambasted busing to achieve "racial balance." Robert Finch, then-Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, specifically denounced the Charlotte court order and one in Los Angeles, calling them "totally unrealistic." The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education had fought busing through the courts, and had acceded to the court order reluctantly. State and local politicians heaped abuse on busing; spurious actions were taken in the legislature and state courts to block busing; 68 members of the Congress, not all from the South, involved themselves as "friends of the court" against busing; the United States Department of Justice questioned the Charlotte busing order in friend-of-the-court briefs that defended the "familiar and traditional" concept of neighborhood schools; thousands of white Charlotte citizens attended rallies, wrote letters and signed petitions against "forced busing"; some picketed the home of the author of the court order, District Judge James B. McMillan; others telephoned him anonymously threatening to kill him.

There seemed little doubt that the furor and hysteria over busing contributed to—if not directly caused—the emotional climate which produced in February, 1971, the burning of the offices of the law firm which had pushed the school and other desegregation cases. Authorities said the fire was deliberately set (it was early morning, on February 4) at the former residence housing the law firm—a block from Charlotte's main business district. Julius Chambers, head of the law firm, said he assumed the fire was in reaction to "unpopular cases" of the law firm, integration cases. Fire in a similar pattern was set at his father's garage and service station in nearby Mt. Gilead, N. C., in August, 1970, when the busing furor was at a peak, and after it was rebuilt, set again in January, 1971. Here, as through the tragic history of southern racial struggle, was expression of the ultimate savagery and lawlessness that underlies the most subtle and sophisticated racism, the political exploitation of the race issue by prestigious leaders and average citizens' susceptibility to such manipulation.

The emotional climate created by adults had to be taken into account also in assessing a series of disorders that broke out among the young people in Charlotte high schools and junior high schools in late February. Evident, too, was the effect on such southern young people of having spent most of their school years in racial isolation or, at best, tokenly desegregated situations.

Resentment by black students at one high school over disciplinary action taken in an interracial incident spread tension to most schools, even elementary ones, and resulted in interracial fighting or confrontations at five other high schools and four junior high schools. Even there a minority of students was involved in actual fighting; seventy was cited as the highest number in any school.

Many students of both races tried to restore order, reduce tensions. Parents of both races quickly volunteered to patrol halls and otherwise calm things down. The students met together in the schools and some churches to discuss what had happened and what might be done.

Then spontaneously, first at one high school, subsequently at three others, the students engaged in what were called "love-in rallies"—simply coming together on their own to talk together, sing, cheer, and express mutual respect and friendship.

Whites tended to blame black students for the trouble. Blacks saw this as but one more indication of what was wrong in the first place, a failure to look at the real causes of grievance. The school administration responded to some of the specific grievances of black students. But what was wrong went deeper, involving attitudes and environmental tone.

Obviously the example of violence had long been set in the interracial context by whites in Charlotte. Those who deplored the violence of students needed to examine how such things as clamor against the court order encourages violence, and how failure to really implement the order jeopardizes the young of both races. They might not only become involved in more violence, but might feel themselves justified in what in the end can only be a ruinous process.

At the root of most of the problems in the schools was a schizophrenia of educational authority: a school board whose majority had opposed the court order, and a school administration which is regarded as having genuinely tried to implement it. This split had been evident from the beginning of the furor of white adults against busing.

Rallies, petitions, and, for a time, talk of a boycott against busing were coordinated by a "Concerned Parents Association" (CPA) which sprang up under the leadership of middle-class whites not previously prominent in civic affairs or politics. Its work was remarkably well-organized; in the spring, three of its standard-bearers were elected to six-year terms on the school board, giving it a six-to-three conservative majority. One of those elected reportedly had not voted since 1952. Leaders and members contended they were not against integration, were not racists—were merely against an inordinate amount of . . . busing.

All of the hullaballoo, continuing from February 5, 1970, when the

court order was issued, until schools were opened in September, with the court order intact, and sporadically since then, was essentially over a part of the order which called for the busing of elementary school children in and out of the black section of Charlotte. (Unlike most southern cities where black people are segregated in scattered sections, Charlotte has segregated virtually all of its black citizens in one section, northwest of downtown—in what amounts to a small-city ghetto.) Integration of the more centralized high schools and junior high schools inside the city and all schools in the county was to be achieved largely through zoning, with some busing involved. It was the "pairing" of 34 elementary schools (27 others were to be desegregated by zoning) to integrate 15,301 white children with 7,077 black ones (22,378 pupils out of a total school enrollment of more than 82,000) that so upset so many people.

See the grown-up. Why is he so upset? Doesn't he look silly?

Before the busing court order, according to briefs in the case, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg system already bused 23,600 pupils on trips whose average was one hour and fourteen minutes one-way. In an interim report filed in the district court in November, 1970, the school board said 43,597 pupils were being bused, and cited *round-trip* time for four schools of more than one hour, the longest round-trip being two hours. The brief of Negro plaintiffs in the case, filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, pointed out that 54.9 per cent of North Carolina school children were riding buses daily in the 1969-1970 school year (highest amount of busing in any state). It cited previous cases in the state where school systems defended busing of Negro students to maintain segregation, one involving an 80-mile round-trip each day from Burnsville to Asheville, and another where some Negro students were bused 25 miles to a boarding school outside the county where they were required to remain all week, busing home on the weekends.

In this context, the local and national sentimentalizing of "neighborhood schools" settles into proper perspective—at best, a clutching to privilege not shared by all and not, as the Negroes' brief pointed out, a venerable tradition at all but rather a recent institution of the big cities, and, at worst, a code-phrase for maintaining the status quo of segregation.

The total of busing in Charlotte under the criticized court order was less than the state average. That which was most criticized, of elementary school children, involved ten pairs or groupings of the 34 elementary schools—with 10,303 white children going as ever to their neighborhood schools in grades one through four and 4,876 black children busing across town to join them—and 2,201 black children going to their neighborhood schools in grades five and six, with 4,998 white children busing in from the suburbs to join them. The plan for this and other regrouping of Charlotte school children beyond the program promulgated by the school board (and ruled inadequate by Judge McMillan) was drawn up by Dr. John A. Finger, Jr., of Rhode Island College. The effect, but not the purpose, of all the court-ordered desegregation in Charlotte was to obtain roughly an 80-20 ratio of white and black pupils in each school. The

main purpose was to dismantle permanently Charlotte's segregated school system and to replace it with a desegregated system in accordance with Supreme Court rulings demanding unitary systems without black schools or white schools, just schools. Since rearrangements were necessary, a ratio analogous to the ratio of white and black population was possible—but integration as required by the Supreme Court rather than "racial balance" was the purpose of the plan and the court order.

Yet white Charlotte protested what leaders had led them to believe was an unnecessary disruption of "neighborhood schools" for the sake of achieving a "racial balance" beyond the compulsion of the law—all of it to be accomplished by the awful imposition on their children of "busing."

What of these children? They seemed, in Charlotte's generally excellent schoolhouses, remote, not really the subjects of such talk, remote even from the solemn statistics of the court case, and not somehow of the same nation as American adults and their chief official, so set against busing. At one of the fifth and sixth grade schools in the ghetto, a number of the white children talked of their daily bus rides to and fro. The complaints were of having to get up earlier, of inadequate heating, of breakdowns sometimes, of noise and of rowdiness sometimes.

"The only thing wrong is that long bus ride," said one boy. "But I'm getting used to it."

"The heater's in front," said another. "I'm in the back. We need some better buses."

"I don't like the bus," said a boy. "I get headaches and all. But I like this school. So I don't mind riding the bus."

A girl said, "The bus is pretty good. Two boys had a fight. One boy's head knocked the window out. But it's pretty good. You sit with whom you want." Another girl said some boys would tie a girl's hair to the seat rail without her knowing it.

A boy: "If you talk too loud, the bus driver puts you with a girl." Another: "We had assigned seats yesterday. The girls didn't like it—they like to sit with their boy friends." A girl: "Our bus driver is a matchmaker and a singer." Another: "The bus is one of the best parts of school. We can talk about things. We keep it down to a steady roar."

A boy: "The bus rides are fun. You get to meet people in other grades."

A Negro boy of the same school said: "We have to stay in school until after the buses leave. We didn't like it at first. But then we understood it was so that we wouldn't get hit by one of the buses leaving."

Was William Poe, chairman of the school board, talking about these children when he said in an interview that Charlotte was "enduring patiently" all the "inconvenience" of desegregation, hoping that the Supreme Court would get rid of "the worst features"? He said the worst was the long-distance busing of elementary school children. He said his own three children were on three different schedules; they couldn't have breakfast together. (One of three CPA school board members reportedly placed his two children in a private school.) Mr. Poe also said of the busing: "People are not going to put up with it permanently. It's not understandable

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to them. It's expensive, time consuming . . . It interferes with family life and church programs."

A long-time observer of Charlotte race relations said of such talk: "It wasn't the busing that was bothering most of them. They just didn't want to send their little white children into black schools, black neighborhoods."

Perhaps Mr. Poe was speaking of the children of the first four grades who boarded the big orange bus for their afternoon trip home to the ghetto from a high-income white suburban school, place of modern architecture, happy, pastel-painted halls and classrooms. They clamored on—noisy, full of energy at the end of the school day, a fine confusion in the finding of seats, changing of seats, getting settled. The driver got aboard, a matron of the neighborhood, who said she undertook the job because her own two children were being bused and she felt people should do all they could to make it all right for the children. The motor started and the bus began to pull away, and the children waved out the window to white friends starting their walk home. There was talk, laughter—much laughter, some shouting, some getting up even while the bus was moving to swap seats. (Money is not available for monitors; the driver said she has not yet mastered the skill of watching the children and the road at the same time.) A studious looking boy dropped his fine cardboard clock with movable hands on the floor. Another boy got up to pick it up and return it to him before anyone could step on it.

A white girl who rides the bus got off, stopped in front of the bus until an approaching car stopped for her, then walked safely to her yard. She turned, grinning, and waved goodbye. (The driver said the black children at first always made room near the door for the few whites who ride the bus. But soon this politeness disappeared, and frequently jostling over seats occurred. She told also of how at first one of the Negro boys always escorted the girl who got off first across the street because she had some difficulty seeing with her bifocals. Once he kept her from moving in front of a car. Her mother called to thank him for saving her life. The girl has since, said the driver, become "women's lib" and gets herself independently across the street.)

The talking, occasional shouting, the laughter keeps up—a din. A boy has a trick box—cardboard optical illusion toy. Boys and girls in relays come back to see him work it, patiently doing it over and over. A boy and girl have a mock fight—somehow gentle. Laurie who is in the third grade and Terry Ann who is in the second sit side-by-side, quiet and ladylike. Laurie has a pony tail, Terry Ann a tight braid and two pony tails. Terry Ann says she didn't ride the bus last year. She liked the school she went to last year better than the one she goes to now. Why? "Because you could stop and buy ice cream on the way home."

At the first stop, five children get off—and as people in the rear yell for the driver to wait, another comes bustling up the aisle to get off, too. At the second stop, the driver sternly admonishes everyone for all the noise—and two boys for fighting as the bus was moving.

Terry Ann points to her church out the window, and tells about how such a big crowd came Sunday night. A boy points to his dog who is kept in a neighbor's yard because it has a fence. Terry Ann tells about her two cats—Kitty and Blue Eyes. The bus is quickly unloading at intervals, stops on nearly every corner. The driver, it turns out, has extended the official stops to accommodate special situations, so that this child won't have to walk so far, that one won't have to cross a street. She knows each of the 58 children of her bus by name, takes care that none gets left behind, worries in a motherly way over their problems. She is not of that small band of southern whites who have involved themselves in race relations. She speaks of her passengers as "Negras."

Terry Ann and Laurie get off at the last stop. Now it is quiet on the bus. The trip—among the longest of the elementary school ones—has taken thirty-five minutes.

II: Some further notes on busing.

The Charlotte school system is not using enough buses for the amount of pupil transportation it has been doing. Consequently, the same bus is used to carry black pupils to their paired schools and white ones to theirs. One school starts at 7:30 (the previously all-white one) and the other at 8:30, with staggered closing hours of 2:30 and 3:30. (Schools were open only an hour and a half for one day the first week.) Black children, who do the most of the busing, have to catch buses the earliest. Tacitly, the arrangement reflects official fear that white parents would not have stood for an arrangement the other way around or fairly balanced, that they might have carried out rather than talked about a boycott. In 1969-70, the system used 278 buses. In 1970-71, it used 500. Some are old ones obtained from the state. Not all are in good repair. The county commission controls appropriations for such equipment. Partly in anticipation of a final order from the Supreme Court regarding the busing, the commission has been doling out the extra money a month at a time. In January, the school board voted against using available federal funds to afford not merely the inadequate transportation currently in use, but an adequate supply of buses and personnel. Much of the criticism of busing has centered on the exorbitant extra cost. Judge McMillan pointed out in court orders and an interview that additional cost for transporting children adequately to implement desegregation would be less than one per cent of the multi-million dollar school budget.

Miss Bernice McMurray, principal of Rama Road Elementary School, one of the paired formerly all-white schools in a high-income white suburb, said the biggest problem has been transportation and the money to pay for it. "You never know if they're going to be on time." When a driver calls in sick, the principal must find a substitute. If this, or the not infrequent breakdowns, causes a delay "two busloads of children wait in the cold." Worried parents have to be reassured, phone call after phone call, when the buses are late in the afternoon. "If we didn't have so much trouble getting the children here and back, this would be one of the best

experiences ever for all the children," she said.

Dr. William Self, superintendent of schools, was in charge of the hurriedly-organized transportation system whose handicapped accommodation of the court order has been an impressive achievement. Generally respected by integrationists and segregationists alike for competence and integrity, Dr. Self was asked in an interview whether he thought the desegregation could be kept going. "I don't know," he said slowly, shaking his head. "The most important question is whether a large amount of money will be committed that has not been committed so far." Most of this would be for transportation, he said.

III: The legal question.

In 1965, Charlotte and Mecklenburg County combined their school systems and adopted what amounted to a zoning and freedom-of-choice method of desegregation—which was given federal court approval. In September, 1968, Negro parents asked the federal district court to compel the school board to eliminate all discrimination in the school system as the Supreme Court had ruled that year school boards had an obligation to do. After extensive hearings, Judge McMillan ruled on April 9, 1969, that schools were unconstitutionally segregrated, that freedom-of-choice had not worked, that the black population of Charlotte was concentrated in one area because of discriminatory laws and government action rather than natural causes, that the school board had located and controlled the size and population of schools so as to maintain segregation, and that transportation by bus was a legitimate tool for desegregating schools. He ordered the school board to draw up plans to eliminate segregation of pupils and faculty.

A plan submitted by the school board in June was ruled inadequate in every respect. Another, calling for transportation of 4,245 black children, submitted in July, was accepted "only with great reluctance" by Judge McMillan as a temporary one-year arrangement, with the reservation that one-way busing would not thereafter be acceptable. He ordered that a new plan be submitted by November for 1970-71. In the meantime, the court found that only 1,315 instead of 4,245 children were bused in the fall of 1969. When the board filed a new plan altering attendance lines of only a few schools, Judge McMillan rejected it out of hand. He had previously held that the Supreme Court decision in *Alexander v. Holmes County* precluded further delay, and now, noting the board's acknowledged refusal to produce a plan which would comply with Supreme Court decisions, he appointed Dr. Finger to prepare a plan.

In February, 1970, the board presented its fourth plan, and Judge McMillan accepted parts of it for junior and senior high schools, adding parts of the Finger plan where required for full integration, and ordered implementation of the Finger plan for elementary schools. (Here, finally, after so many opportunities for the board to find anything better that would be in compliance, was the notorious busing plan.)

Judge McMillan, again citing the Supreme Court dictum to desegregate

now, litigate later, ordered the plan for elementary schools implemented by April, and the one for junior and senior high schools by May. The school board appealed and asked delay until September. Judge McMillan, however, ordered a delay until September himself after the Supreme Court indicated a new inclination to tolerate that. The delay came on the day after President Nixon's policy statement on schools which denounced busing.

Gov. Bob Scott (Democrat) had urged President Nixon to have the Justice Department intervene against Judge McMillan's order, and many Charlotte whites sent a form telegram to the President: "Faced with forced busing. Request intervention as per campaign promise." The Justice Department did so intervene, with Jerris Leonard, assistant attorney general in charge of civil rights, writing in a friend-of-the-court memorandum to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals that "courts might carefully consider whether, for the purpose of achieving a precise, system-wide racial balance, a plan would require a school board involved to make unreasonable increments in transportation expenditures, the number of students bused, distances traveled and the like." And: "Thus we think that the question facing this court is whether, in view of the District Court's supplemental findings, the circumstances of the case and the alternatives reasonably available, the court below (McMillan) invoked a remedy so extreme as to constitute an abuse of discretion." (It was the second time the Nixon Justice Department had sided against equal school opportunity; the first was when it sought delay of 30 Mississippi cases in August, 1969, at which point the Supreme Court issued its order to desegregate at once.) Abuse of discretion is a reason for overruling a district judge in such a case—but the harshness of tone in the Leonard memorandum almost makes one believe it was written out of pique.

(A friend-of-the-court brief to the Supreme Court by Solicitor General Erwin S. Griswold was more balanced. Though it seemed to argue for desegregation and against busing even though the latter might be the only way to achieve the former, it did grant a district judge his leeway in such a ruling as McMillan's—in this instance so long as he did not base the ruling on a belief the Constitution required a racial balance.)

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in May upheld the plan for junior and senior high schools and, in effect, rejected that for elementary ones—ordering a new plan based on HEW assistance. It declared itself favorably impressed with the Justice Department brief, and stated that not every school in a unitary system must be integrated, and urged a standard of "reasonableness" for attaining integration. The Supreme Court in June reinstated Judge McMillan's order for elementary schools but remanded the case to his court for further proceedings pending its own hearings in the Charlotte and other cases in October. Judge McMillan, when neither the board of education, the plaintiffs, nor he liked the plans developed by HEW for elementary schools, ordered the original Finger plan back in force for them—and so it was when schools opened in September.

The Charlotte case, through this history and in arguments when the Supreme Court held its historic October hearings, raised important questions which the court in its discretion could or could not have considered: (1) the whole question of busing and neighborhood schools—whether limitations are to be put on busing even if it is the only way to achieve a unitary school system; (2) whether desegregation of all all-black schools is indeed a necessary criterion for establishing a unitary system; (3) whether previous rulings requiring desegregation of all all-black schools in small-town systems apply to complex urban situations.

Beyond this, regardless of the Supreme Court's eventual ruling, the Charlotte case is one of several which seem to raise an ultimate question about school integration in America's democracy. A strong part of the original case was the evidence presented and ruling by Judge McMillan that government action was responsible for the location of black people in one isolated part of Charlotte. Involved in this were city zoning regulations, city planning, urban renewal, public housing locations, street and public highway locations—in effect, actions by all levels of government, state, local and national, as well as private discrimination. Judge McMillan ruled: "There is so much state action [state as defined as subject to the Fourteenth Amendment] embedded in and shaping these events that the resulting segregation is not innocent or 'de facto' and the resulting schools are not unitary or desegregated." If this might be said of Charlotte, North Carolina, of what city in the United States might it not? Were such evidence considered nationally, President Nixon's disingenious vow to fight "de jure" segregation might turn out to mean the opposite of what he seemed to intend. The Supreme Court might limit its ruling to the particulars of the Charlotte case and the discretion of Judge McMillan's particular rulings and actions. But if the original Supreme Court outlawing of school discrimination is ever to be followed to its logical end, if all of white America is ever to face its essential hypocrisy in the matter, America will have to deal with the broad question raised by Charlotte and its mini-ghetto and the government action that created it.

IV: Judge McMillan.

He was generally considered as one of the establishment lawyers before his appointment to the federal bench in 1968. He speaks freely and honestly in his rulings of his own emotional bias against busing before he faced the facts of Charlotte's deliberate segregation of schools, and the consequences. (How it came about and what it did to children were the two things that most struck him in the long process of hearings in the case, he said in one press interview.) The evidence of consequences was presented in terms of relative scores of black children and white on standard achievement tests. Sixth graders in all-black schools scored at about fourth grade level; children in integrated and all-white schools scored considerably higher.

"I lived here 24 years without knowing what was going on," he said in an interview. "I really didn't know."

He is 54, the son of a North Carolina farm family (he was bused 26 miles a day to his segregated high school), a graduate of the University of North Carolina and Harvard Law School, a Navy veteran, past president of the state bar association, a Democrat, a past leader in court reform. He has sandy hair, fair skin, a farmer's plain face with a stubborn mouth. His voice, enunciation is dry, ironic. He has carried a pistol for self-protection at heights of emotional reaction to his rulings. A colleague, representative of the level of sophistication from which professional criticism of him has come, said local lawyers thought he was just one of them—but then found out after he got on the bench that all along he "belonged to the American Civil Liberties Union and other left-wing activities like that." In a press interview when asked about his friendships with conservative colleagues, Judge McMillan said: "Just because I drink with a man is no sign I think like him."

Dick Phillips, dean of the University of North Carolina Law School, "defended" him (with a southern dry humor equal to his own) against some of the charges that have been made since the ruling:

> It's not fair to call him a liberal and not fair to say he picked it up at Harvard. He's enlightened in the sense of the most progressive people in the state. His character and ideas had been determined long before he went to Harvard. He came up during the Depression and was raised by a good mother. He went to church and he went to Chapel Hill.

Asked in an interview how it came to be he, of all the South's district court judges, who finally confronted face-on the compelling question of busing, he spoke of a penchant for consistency, an inability to retreat from the simple logic of the law of the case. In his final "busing order" for the 1970-71 school year, issued on August 3, 1970, he addressed himself to the idea of "reasonableness" (without mentioning its having been raised by the Circuit Court) and summed up more eloquently his grasp of the meaning of law for the South and America:

> Reasonable remedies should always be sought. Practical rather than burdensome methods are properly required. On facts reported above, the methods required by this order are reasonable. However, if a constitutional right is being denied, this court believes that it is the constitutional right that should prevail against the cry of unreasonableness . . . If, as this court and the Circuit Court have held, the rights of children are being denied, the cost and inconvenience of restoring those rights is no reason under the Constitution for continuing to deny them.

V: A further legal note.

The Charlotte case was prepared and fought by the legal firm of Chambers, Stein, Ferguson and Lanning, one of the growing number of integrated law firms in southern cities with a special interest in racial and social justice. The issues confronted, the alertness to relevant recent Supreme Court rulings, the ability to fit the law to the whole context

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of Charlotte's racial and social problems (a current suit seeks affirmative government action for open housing) by such law firms is part of a new chapter in the long southern history of struggle through the courts for racial justice—in which the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., as in Charlotte, continues to be a source of strength.

VI: Notes, political and otherwise.

Spokesmen who claimed the Concerned Parents Association was not essentially racist or segregationist were probably by their lights telling the truth—even though the organization likely did have the support of hard-line segregationists and such people as have practiced sporadic terrorism, telephone threats, home bombings, over the years of Charlotte's racial struggles. By all accounts, many of the "better" whites voted for the CPA candidates for the school board. Whether many now regret this or have come to a degree of acceptance of busing after seeing it work is a matter of conjecture; some think so, others not. Most observers agree the organization will remain effective in politics where integration is an issue, but will not otherwise amount to a cohesive force. But local and state politics suffered erosion from the furor over busing. Two-way reenforcement was evident: the people influenced the leaders who in turn further inflamed the people. Governor Scott for a time seemed to take a hands-off position on busing, but as public sentiment grew hotter in Charlotte, he became an avid anti-busing spokesman. This is familiar enough in southern racial demagogic politics; what made it different this time in Charlotte and other parts of the South was that the highest official in the country seemed to be involved in the process.

The effect of Nixon southern-strategy politics on Charlotte was part of a general pattern: Just as the campaign-promised weakening of HEW seemed to offer surcease from compliance with school integration law, the courts became more demanding than HEW had ever been. The administration, caught in a dilemma, ended up pleasing no one. Its rhetoric displeased integrationists; its inability to stop overnight the direction of the courts displeased those against busing and/or integration. The brand of politicians directing the frustrated strategy must have been sorely tempted to try to put more than ordinary pressure on the judiciary.

Mr. Poe told why people like himself were so upset by the demands of the judiciary and why they were so disappointed over the administration's inability to do anything about the demands. In the telling, there is insight into how so much of the white populace of Charlotte, surely no worse than most white Southerners in racial attitudes, indeed reputed in the past to be a little better, could become so vociferous in what essentially amounted to a law-resistant position. Mr. Poe said he journeyed to Washington twice to see Mr. Leonard and once to see Mr. Griswold, and each time all he wanted to tell them was that Charlotte was not some rural, recalcitrant, racist place, but had tried all along to obey the integration law. It therefore deserved more time to work out its problems.

Perry Morgan, editor of the Charlotte *News,* whose anti-busing stand

has been so strong that he has emerged as a sort of central figure in the situation, said much the same thing as Mr. Poe in an interview. He said if tne court really wanted integration it would have given a city like Charlotte with a good past record of compliance time to evolve a long-range building program to put schools where they could be integrated without so much busing.

Meanwhile, Charlotte was waiting for the Supreme Court to rule on its case. The waiting has been a crucial part of what has happened so far. Many of the children, especially in the upper grades, have not identified themselves with the school they attend, have not become involved in activities or even studies deeply, feeling the arrangement to be temporary. Some observers said most white parents have accepted the busing so far only because they believe the Supreme Court will throw it out. Dire predictions are made on both sides of what might happen when the court rules. Blacks, in some views, would be disillusioned with the nation by an adverse ruling to the point of severe alienation, if not violence. Some whites, including Mr. Poe and Mr. Morgan, predict massive withdrawal of white support of public schools should the ruling uphold busing. Mr. Morgan spoke of a resulting "integration of the impoverished."

Both the boycott effort at the beginning of the year and an attempt to stir separatist sentiment in the black community failed. No more than 2,000 white children were withdrawn to segregationist private schools. One observer cited as the reason for this, North Carolina's tradition of plain people dependent on and believing in public education. The state has no aristocracy of graduates of select private schools, as some southern ones do. This meant, in his view, that whites would rant and rail if the present plan were upheld, but eventually would accept it. There are at least a few small hints so far in Charlotte that they might even come to like it.

It is easy, of course, to point out how many years since 1954 Charlotte has had to do whatever was necessary to comply with the law. But the truth is that in the faulty manner in which school (and other) integration law has been enforced, in the essential hypocrisy of America's past approach to the obligations of this law, including the hypocrisy of blinding itself to the "de jure" nature of most "de facto" segregation, Charlotte has been technically in compliance. The plaint of men like Mr. Poe and Mr. Morgan was basically the familiar one of Southerners over a decade of gradualism: I've been for all that's gone before, but now they've gone too far. In this context, the CPA claim that it is not segregationist and the less sophisticated versions of Mr. Poe's position vocalized by the CPA school board members are easier to understand and somehow less sinister.

The people caught in the anti-bus hysteria, many of them, seem in this view more mistaken than racist. Better local and state leadership might have at least given them a more accurate, realistic view of their position *vis-a-vis* the law. (The city's other paper, The Charlotte *Observer,* has generally supported the court order, but less vigorously after reported loss of circulation over the stand.) National leadership has since 1954 been more deeply at fault. Something is indeed wrong with a nation which could

allow leaders in a place like Charlotte to convince themselves or kid themselves into thinking that, even as they continued the process of building a ghetto and a system of segregated schools, they were in compliance with law against segregation.

The setting fire to the Chambers firm's law offices might be expected to shock some white Charlotte leaders and people into seeing what at base all along they have stood for. But such terrorism in the past obviously did not provide immunity against the busing hysteria. In the spring of 1965, Mr. Chambers' automobile was dynamited in New Bern, N. C., while he was attending a civil rights rally. Three Ku Klux Klansmen were arrested, and given suspended sentences. On November 22, 1965 (the second anniversary of the assassination of President John Kennedy), bombs were exploded in the predawn hours at the homes of four black Charlotte leaders—Mr. Chambers, City Councilman Fred Alexander, his brother, Kelly Alexander, state president of the NAACP, and Dr. Reginald Hawkins, dentist and militant civil rights leader. Damage was considerable at all four homes; fortunately none of the occupants, including sleeping women and children, was injured. The case has never been solved.

On the surface, Charlotte does not seem the kind of place of raw racist hatred that would engender such terrorism. Whites in the past prided themselves on their peaceful acquiesence in token desegregation, made it a subject of Chamber of Commerce boosterism. Thoughtful black people, viewing the past and the recent furor over busing, say simply that racism is just more subtle, more sophisticated. The terrorism shows that the meaning of racism, raw or subtle, is the same, just as the effect—as on children in the previously segregated Charlotte schools—is the same.

VII: See the schools.

It is in the light of so much of Charlotte's adult response to school desegregation, and the failure of so much adult leadership, from the President on down, that the disturbances among the young people in the schools in February must be judged. It was possible shortly before they occurred to assess major problems within the schools and conclude that desegregation was succeeding, despite adults. Their occurrence suggests the importance of paying immediate attention to the problems within the schools and the deeper need to understand what these problems mean to the young people involved. In interviews with school officials, teachers, parents and young people, the following emerged as main problems during the six months leading up to the February disturbances:

Discriminatory attitudes, actions on the part of some officials and teachers, some children (this a minority balanced by another minority making every effort to help integration work); internal segregation in the schools, the very most of this resulting from grouping of children within classes on the basis of performance levels; some indications of suspensions and expulsions too heavily among blacks giving rise to the suspicion among some blacks that it is to cut down the amount of integration; roughhousing, interracial fighting (how much of it normal, how much racial is proble-

matical); disruptions from bomb threats, busing delays and monitoring by parents, mostly white ones of the black-area schools; narcotics (again, with no ascertainable racial significance). One high school teacher said discouragedly that sometimes a day could be counted good or bad on the basis of whether there was a bomb threat, or whether police had come in looking for a student about some offense outside the school. The latter problem would seem an interracial class concern and a problem of the whole community made visible to the whole community by desegregation. A more serious concern was the same teacher's feeling that parents opposed to busing were watching every move of teachers, in effect repressing their freedom of expression and choice of materials.

Grievances articulated by black students during and after the disturbances reflect the same problems—calls for black administrative officials and counselers in schools where there are none, for more active human relations committees in the schools to foster communication between the races and between students and school officials. There had been resentment among black students that Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday was not properly observed. Students of both races who are bused resented club activities and the like being held after school because it is difficult for them to attend. Students who had changed schools felt a sense of loss of school traditions, spirit; this particularly affected black high schoolers because all high schools had become predominantly white.

Another issue, evident in January, suggests how the struggle to achieve desegregation has brought to light attitudes long abiding in public education which tend to attach more importance to things than to children, and which ignore the legitimate wishes of the children. This issue had nothing to do with race; indeed, a black student at one of the high schools where no trouble occurred said white and black students were united in a stand about it. The issue was lunch time—complaint of a lack of enough time to get through cafeteria lines and eat leisurely. In some instances, this had led to jostling for places in line.

Other issues suggested a deeper layer of problems. Black students felt that expulsions and police actions (some 15 or 20 cases) went too heavily against blacks in the aftermath of the disturbances. Julius Chambers said an investigation was underway to determine whether this should be raised in federal court. He was critical of a four-hour school board meeting, televised locally, at which principals told what had happened at each school. He said it seemed to be trying and convicting black students. One principal used the pronunciation, "Negra." A white, senstive to race relations, could view the same meeting and consider the performance of the prinicipals generally constructive. In this way, the struggle for integration continued as an educational process for black and white Southerners, showing them, among other things, wide gulfs in perception as a part of the legacy of segregation.

The most hopeful instance of such education were the rallies that occurred at the high schools. Dr. Laird Lewis, principal of Myers Park High School, described his own feelings watching two thousand young

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people joining hands in a circle, singing, some of them crying. "It was like the old-time religion. There were white and black, rich and poor, expressing mutual respect and love for one another." He said there was at least for the time less self-segregation in the cafeteria and student lounge, and less fear and distrust among students.

Dr. Self suggested at the four-hour school board meeting that additional staff be hired to comprise teams, one white and one black, of human-relations workers in each high school. Their job would be to build on student communication already established to develop future programs. (During previous months, the school administration had employed such things as a rumor-control center and closed-television instructions in human relations for principals and teachers.) Negro Alderman Fred Alexander had earlier proposed a new procedure for police in handling school disturbances. He said a white and black team of officers should make an initial investigation and be empowered to decide whether more officers were needed. (The intrusion of many police and many parents on the disturbance scenes had been as disruptive as the fighting, some observers said.)

Principal Lewis and Alderman Alexander both, in differing ways, directed themselves to the problems underlying the specific causes of student discontent. Dr. Lewis spoke of a general atmosphere of frustration and tension. "You can't change everything with just a quick move," he said, expressing confidence, though, that desegregation would work. He spoke of frustrations for both races, of adult distrust, unrest.

Mr. Alexander addressed himself to the split in the attitude of the school board majority and the school administration. Somebody, he said, had to tell the school board people were not going to put up with what it was doing. He said the attitude of the school board was against desegregation, against the federal court intervention, and on the side of "anybody else against desegregation." Thus principals and teachers not wanting to cooperate with desegregation did not feel they had to follow administration procedures. And those trying to make desegregation work are "scared of the school board," he said.

Beyond busing hysteria and schoolhouse fist-fights, the impressive thing about Charlotte is that things have worked as well as they have against so many impediments. Given anything like the support and the resources they deserve, the young people and those operating the schools do seem capable of moving beyond the mere physical placing of bodies in a unitary school system. The problems, both on the surface and at deeper levels, are not insurmountable. Given half a chance, Charlotte could achieve real integration, and that would mean real education.

VIII: See the children.

In ultimate terms of real education, the important thing to have seen in Charlotte was the resilience of the young people. The "love-in" rallies that followed the disturbances in February were a magnificent display of the will of a majority of them to work things out for themselves, to

escape past patterns of destructiveness, to deal creatively with a situation made unnecessarily difficult by those past patterns. It was this in the Charlotte young people (and their counterparts across the South) that dedicated educators could encourage, and build upon. Surely parents saw the beauty of spirit flickering there; surely they would be proud of their children, and encourage the good in them.

The rallies were a dramatic, spontaneous expression of something that had been there all along, that adults, parents, teachers, school officials alike, needed to listen to and learn from. A black student at one of the high schools where a rally occurred, Calvin Miller, described how it felt afterward. "Things are a whole lot better. People are talking to each other now, mixing in together — everyone is really cooperating now, really talking to each other."

Here, student-created, was the basis for building within the schools customs and programs that would remove the barriers of racial concern from the main purpose of education. And here was the basis for the cooperative reconstruction of education—to listen to the students, consider their interests, utilize their creativity. Charlotte had the opportunity in its desegregated schools to accomplish such real reconstruction of education, so badly needed across the South and the nation. There were as many impediments, as many signs of failure present as ones of hope—but everywhere, given a chance, the potential of the young was evident.

In the white suburban school, a second grade is having a play period out in the pretty lobby. Happy music is coming from a record player, and different groups are doing different things, some jumping rope, some dancing, some playing catch, some using an indoor bowling set. The black teacher moves easily among the black and white youngsters, seeming to enjoy all their noise and exuberance. At the end, she organizes them for a group game. Part of the class forms a circle; each in the other part stands behind the child he wants as a partner. Race is obviously transcended. Some partnerships are black and white, some white and white, some black and black.

It is not so in an eighth grade algebra class. The students drift in before class, seat themselves randomly. Most whites are on one side of the room; the whites who are on the other are separated by a row of chairs from the five black students in the class.

At the Oak Lawn Elementary School, one of the fifth and sixth grade schools in the ghetto, it is felt that the teacher has a responsibility to guide children away from such grouping which grows as much out of cultural experience, familiarity, as race. This school is considered one of the most successful in taking advantage of the new educational opportunities in Charlotte. The philosophy of the black principal, Mrs. Gwendolyn D. Cunningham, pervades classrooms and hallways, is reflected in the openness of black and white faces of the children. The philosophy seems to be one of loving children and encouraging the best in them. She moves about the school, energetic, enthusiastic, calling out to children, seemingly knowing

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each by name, stopping to talk with any who wants to. A white boy approaches her, says he has decided not to seek a transfer to another teacher after all. He had complained the teacher picked on him. Mrs. Cunningham had suggested to him that he would take his real problem with him. What was that? Himself. He had thought it over and agreed, he said, and would try to work out that problem without changing teachers. Was the teacher black? Mrs. Cunningham chuckled—no, no.

Child after child said he liked the school because children were considered important and were allowed to work out their own problems. A white teacher, transferred into this new situation after being in the same white school for thirty years, said: "They're just children. Only two parents were at our Christmas party. I wish they could have all been there. They would have seen for themselves how well the children are getting along."

A black teacher, experienced more than most in integrated education, told of a thing that happened in one of her classes. A black pupil, large for his age, tending to be a bully, had showed from the beginning hostility to white children. She had talked with him, with his mother about it. His mother felt much the same way. But finally all three agreed that given the situation, the thing to do was to try to get along in it. When the boy was absent one day, white and black children came to the teacher about him. In the spirit of the school, it is not considered tattling to talk about another child's problem. The problem they came with was that the boy had been taking pencils and the like from everybody. They showed in his desk a plastic bag stuffed full of such contraband—a fantastic amount. She confronted him the next morning, gently, sympathetically. He finally admitted all were not his. What should he do? Give them back, he said. How would he do it? He would handle it. As is the custom in the class, if a child has something to say, the teacher announces it—and she did for him that morning. He got up and manfully, with no excuses, said he had things that weren't his. He said that pupils should come up in groups to claim what was theirs. The teacher said it was all done with dignity, that no child giggled or nudged another, and that not a few had tears in their eyes, as did she. When it was over, she asked how many understood now what an act of courage was. All said they did, that the boy had performed one. Did he feel better, she asked. He said he did. In a class discussion some time later, he said the reason he liked that school was because if you made a mistake, you could correct it, that people instead of hitting you for it, helped you correct it.

Many of the children there come from homes where opposition to busing was most strenuous. Slowly, some of these parents have come to share what most of the white children feel—that it is a better school. One father who had at the beginning of the year told his child's teacher he resented the situation bitterly finally came to a PTA meeting. He told the teacher he had been convinced by his child that he had been wrong. His reason might prevail in Charlotte, in schools becoming real schools across the South, might eventually in all of America: "It is," he said, "like in the Bible. A little child shall lead them."

MOBILE, ALABAMA:

THE ESSENCE OF SURVIVAL

By Robert E. Anderson, Jr.

In the spring when the azaleas and dogwoods bloom and you drive along Government Street beneath Spanish moss clinging from ancient oaks, it probably is harder for the visitor to think of Mobile, Alabama, in terms other than the cliche its Chamber of Commerce likes to paint—a burgeoning, industrial port city of the new South, mindful of the best in its past, but making progress on all fronts, including race relations. But in January this year, the wind from the Gulf driving a cold, steady rain, the smell of the city's paper mills rancid in the air, outer charms were under cover, realities easier to read. Focus on the question of public school desegregation in this the 17th year since the Brown decision, the eighth since the first Negro high school students began to attend classes with whites in Mobile's prestigious Murphy High School and what you find, sometimes stated boldly, sometimes implicitly, sometimes hidden in expressions of good intentions is an air of deep misgiving that Mobile is capable of dealing with the education crisis to which white leadership has brought the city.

In a small, neatly-furnished low-rent apartment in the city's black ghetto, a mother of five put into a single sentence the impression most thoughtful blacks have of the city's school desegregation policies: "They are trying to make us mad enough to pull our children out of the white schools." It was a statement reminiscent of the words of 17 year-old Tyrone Thomas who last year told the Southern Regional Council how his white principal called him "nigger", how the frustrations of in-school discrimination were leading many black youths toward separatist-oriented thinking, really against their deeper instincts, their sense of the need for integrated education.[1]

In another part of town, on the second floor of a weather-worn office building, a middle-aged black man leaned forward away from the cold at the window. "Desegregation, civil rights were things you didn't talk about to the white power structure in this town," he said. "Men like me. We are educated. We have lived all our lives here and we know how the Negro high school kids feel. We have seen and lived through things a lot worse than they have. The only difference in us and them is that we are older and educated. But we know what's in their hearts."

But whites do not know—or if they do are too frightened to get involved, too indifferent or too hostile to blacks to care what they think, or, knowing, feel that the enormity of the situation is beyond their capacities to af-

[1] *Voices From the South*, by Betsy Fancher, Southern Regional Council, August, 1970.

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fect change. Downtown in the newly-renovated offices of the Mobile County Department of Education, Dr. Harold Collins, superintendent of schools since September, 1970, seemed an exception as he outlined his plans for education in 1971 and his hopes for Mobile. He spoke of increased library services and in-service training for black and white teachers in the coming summer. "I'm very optimistic," he said.

There was no optimism, however, in the words of black civil rights leader David Jacobs who heads the American Friends Service Committee's Mobile Education Project. Jacobs is an unreasonable militant in the eyes of most Mobile whites. In person he is a gentle, tough-minded native of the city with far greater rapport among the average black parent than whites care to admit.

"It will take some kind of tragedy, like a hurricane, maybe, for people here to wake up, to grow, to understand."

Jacobs' strategy now is to work with black parents and students, assisting them in grass roots organizing to improve education. His pessimism with Mobile's white leadership is not self-induced, a conditioned black response that automatically equates all white actions with duplicity. It is a pessimism, rather, that is born of long and sad experience, from seeing meaningful integration time and again delayed, blocked, and from close involvement in desegregation efforts.

The Background of Delay

The Mobile school desegregation case is long and complex, having gone before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals thirteen times since 1963. To trace the entire thread of the lengthy litigation would make a formidable tome. What was at issue between the plantiffs and the school board, however, prior to 1968, can be reduced essentially to the fact that the freedom-of-choice court-order plan under which the Mobile district operated between 1963 and 1968 had produced only minimal desegregation. As late as 1967, for example, only 638 Negroes attended schools with whites. Since March, 1968, however, when the Fifth Circuit ordered the city to adopt a plan of assigning students by zone rather than freedom-of-choice, the issue of neighborhood schools has emerged as a shibboleth for white parents opposed to various zoning arrangements drawn by a pouting, reluctant school board and a more aggressive team of HEW Title IV education experts brought into the case in 1968 on orders from the Fifth Circuit to District Judge Daniel Thomas.

In 1968 only a few weeks before schools were scheduled to open under a zoning plan that would have put 2,400 Negro students into previously white schools and 1,200 white students into formerly Negro schools, Judge Thomas, after an extensive hearing, determined that the zoning plan would pose too great administrative problems and granted the school board another year under freedom-of-choice. A militant white reaction against the plan had brought into being an organization known as STAND (Stand Together and Never Divide) which professed to oppose the plan solely because it violated the neighborhood school concept—but the vir-

ulence of its pronouncements, and the conservative background of its leaders, brought many blacks in Mobile to believe that the organization was, in truth, simply a more sophisticated version of the White Citizens Council, rallying now for freedom-of-choice as it had in the past railied for pure segregation.

The district court's ruling in favor of free choice was appealed by the Negro plantiffs and in June, 1969, the judgment was overturned by the Fifth Circuit which noted that the District Court had failed to follow its zoning mandate of 1968. The appeals court directed that a new plan be devised and ordered the District Court to request the U. S. Office of Education to collaborate with the Mobile Board of School Commissioners in preparation of such a plan. Local school officials and the HEW team clashed over the federal agency's proposals which called for cross-town busing of 2,000 Negro students, and in district court Judge Thomas rejected the plan, again allowing for limited freedom-of-choice. Negro plantiffs in late August, 1969, again appealed to the Fifth Circuit. Further litigation, further appeals had by the fall of 1970 set this stage: a zoning plan under which the system was to operate called for some 10,000 students to attend schools which were not in their immediate neighborhoods; six all-white schools with enrollments of 7,000 students and six all-black schools with enrollments of 5,000 still existed. Theoretically some 60,000 students were to be in desegregated schools.

The Non-Bused and the Non-Conforming

Events since schools opened last fall, however, have convinced black parents that the school board has craftily, in full awareness of what it was about, set out to make integration unbearable. The case for such a conspiracy theory is persuasive. William Crane, chairman of the school board, has described the court order under which Mobile schools are operating as "asinine." At best the Board's approach, according to most knowledgeable civil rights observers in the city, has been one of washing its hands of any responsibility to see the court's mandate implemented. A source who fears repercussions if he is identified said that he had heard a high education official in the city declare that Mobile was going "to prove to the federal bureaucrats that integration won't work."

Although many students under the zoning plan now attend schools as much as two and a half miles from their homes, many have no means to do so other than walking. The school board says it will bus only those students who were eligible to be bused last year. The system presently owns 252 buses and claims that to give bus transportation to every child who needs it this school year it would have to add 100 more buses at an estimated cost of $1,000,000. That much money, school officials say, is not available. Critics note, however, that $2,000,000 *was* available for renovating the present education building the past year. They also point out that under federal Emergency School Fund regulations it would have been possible to have gotten some money for school buses, a fact that they suspect was deliberately ignored by school administrators.

Some of the difficulties of black teachers in the current school year were described in hearings before the Alabama Advisory Committee to the U. S. Civil Rights Commission last October and also in unauthorized interviews with an SRC representative in January, 1971. (Unauthorized because teachers and principals in the Mobile County school system are forbidden these days to discuss school problems with outsiders, without permission.) Under the court order, faculty composition in each school had to be on the ratio of 60 per cent white; 40 per cent Negro, roughly paralleling the population proportions of Mobile County. This meant that large numbers of teachers of both races had to be transferred. Before school opened black principals who were to remain principals in the new school year (most in predominantly black schools) were told that they could retain 20% of their key faculty members under the new desegregation plan. As it turned out none were able to retain nearly so many and there is suspicion within the black community that the real reason the principals were asked to name their key personnel was "to finger the best people" so they could be transferred to predominantly white schools. Whether the charge is true or not, most of the county's more experienced teachers, white and black, now teach in predominantly white schools, a fact attested to by numerous teachers in testimony before the civil rights advisory committee. Moreover, the teachers said, they had almost no advance notice that they were to be transferred. Testimony was also given telling of the transfer and demotion of black principals and coaches. Numerous fights involving black and white youths have occurred in Mobile schools this year with the most frequent solution being the disciplining and even arrest of black students and subsequent suspension.

By far the most controversial decision of school authorities involves so-called "non-conforming students". These are white students who, under the court's zoning plan, were assigned to schools with more blacks than whites and which, for the most part, were located in black residential areas. These students have simply refused to go to the schools they were assigned and instead attend classes in schools with predominantly white enrollments.[2] Estimates of the number of such students vary. At the beginning of the school term when white parents accompanied their children to school—insisting on the right of freedom-of-choice (which Gov. George Wallace publicly assured them was theirs)[3]—the official number, according to Dr. Collins, was as high as 1,000, but he puts it around 15

[2]A memorandum on the subject from school board attorneys to school officials although advising them to discourage non-conformers and pointing out that the students could not be issued textbooks, allowed to participate in school activities, take tests or receive grades, also stated that the students "cannot knowingly be officially enrolled or registered at the improper school." The modifying word "knowingly" has been the key to the problem of enforcement. Civil rights leaders say school officials have been at pains not to be "knowingly" aware of illegal transfers.

[3]Speaking to a Labor Day crowd of 4,000 people in suburban Pritchard, Wallace said: "I recommend that you good people exercise your freedom-of-choice when you send your children to school Wednesday." New York *Times*, September 8, 1970. "If I were you on school day, I'd exercise my freedom-of-choice," Wallace said . . . The roar of the crowd turned to laughter when he added, "In the peaceful way you always do things." Charlotte *Observer*, September 9, 1970.

today. Black leaders think the number legally is vastly higher because they have discovered that many students now are falsifying their addresses, a few parents even transferring guardianships to grandparents or friends who live in zones where predominantly white schools are located. Dr. Collins' response to this charge is that he has no resources to check on the addresses of all the county's 70,000 students. "We are in the business of education," he says. Under a district court decision of last year non-conformers are not supposed to receive grades or be allowed to participate in school activities, a fact which Dr. Collins believes has discouraged non-conformers. Blacks protest that no disciplinary action was ever taken against any of the non-conformers, just as the state education department announced it would refuse to prosecute parents who kept their children out of school altogether at the beginning of the school year, in violation of the state's compulsory school attendance law. Official figures for enrollments prior to school opening last year do not coincide with unofficial figures given to SRC from a few selected high schools. Murphy High School, for instance, which was the scene of a widely publicized student fight in September was supposed to have had 1456 black students and 1114 white students. The figure today is roughly 400 whites and 1800 blacks. At Toulminville High School there were supposed to have been 247 whites, 401 blacks. There were 18 whites enrolled in January, 1971. Such figures are not comprehensive, of course, but the arithmetic from these two schools alone show nearly 1,000 white students not attending schools to which they were assigned at the beginning of the year. Figures from other schools doubtless would add to the number. What is happening to such students? Many are now apparently officially enrolled at predominantly white Davidson High School which was *supposed* to have had 2350 whites to 70 blacks. These figures meant that at the beginning of the year the school was 477 over capacity. In October, 1970, its enrollment was 980 over capacity. Dr. Collins' estimate of only 15 non-conformers now may technically be correct, but there are obviously many hundreds of other white students who have managed to become legally enrolled in schools of their choice. Dr. Collins did not say so, but it is generally accepted by Mobile blacks that the reasons the transfers have been accepted is to placate white parents.

"Education is Problem-Solving"

Altogether Mobile County's school enrollment is 4,000 less than it was last year. Some are drop-outs, some are students who are attending public schools in other counties, living with relatives or friends, some have defected to private schools. A total of three new private academies, are known to have been chartered during the past year. The First Independent Methodist Church was instrumental in their founding. Three years ago the church began its own private academy in the church building itself housing children from kindergarten through the tenth grade. It has approximately 200 students. Wesleyan Academy located in Citronelle, Alabama, 45 miles from Mobile city limits was begun in 1970 with an

estimated enrollment of 300, handling grades one through eleven. The school provides busing for students at the rate of $1.00 per day. Another new private school—Chickasaw Academy—accommodates grades seven through 12. Officials estimate that the school has at least 25 students per class. None of the new academies is integrated.

Dr. Collins seems dedicated to the principle of public education. He does not believe private schools have a chance to educate more than a small fraction of students anywhere. He sees himself as an administrator with many problems, (most of which, as a matter of fact, he inherited) all of which he thinks can be solved with time and patience. "Education is problem solving," he says. This is the theme of some 100 speeches he has made before PTA and civic groups since taking over the administrative reins of Mobile County's public schools last year.[4] Though viewed without enthusiasm among more activist black leaders, he is regarded by some blacks as a sincere man trying to act fairly. He says that he wants to get on with the job of education, starting with people "where they are." He spoke with some pride of the fact that all of the city's schools now have full-time libraries, staffed full-time, but he spoke with great disappointment about the apparent fate of Mobile's application for funds under the federal government's Emergency School Aid program which to date has received no final action. In December, HEW officials wrote Dr. Collins that the proposal was being held up pending further information on such matters as student transfers and teacher discrimination. Dr. Collins called the application a "very fine proposal" which would be used for new instructional materials, the employment of 150 teacher aides, 80 per cent of whom would be assigned to the schools experiencing the most integration. The aides would have been used for "clerical and routine management duties, thereby releasing teachers for more student contact." In addition, it was proposed that they be used in liaison roles to parents and to the community at large. The proposal also called for orientation training for the aides and the teachers to which the aides would be assigned. Dr. Collins expressed resentment that the proposal was opposed by "highly militant groups" in Mobile which he felt were responsible for the funds being delayed. A spokesman for the American Friends Service Committee who has opposed the federal grant said the chief reason it has done so is because Mobile has not been in compliance with the court order on such obvious matters as student transfers. HEW, at this point, seems to agree.

There was at least one other proposal in the application which caused some concern among civil rights advocates—a request for funds to change plumbing facilities. Dr. Collins explained this on the ground that under the new zoning plan there would be younger, smaller students attending schools formerly attended by older, larger students and vice

[4]Dr. Collins' predecessor, Dr. Cranford Burns, who resigned prior to the opening of schools in 1970, was a source of discontent among civil rights leaders who saw him as an obstructionist in earlier desegregation efforts. His resignation, however, was unrelated to civil rights controversy.

versa. Implicit in the proposal, however, was an old white southern phobia about bathroom facilities that had been used by Negroes, and whether intended or not the proposal was taken by some as a racial slur. Such a response illustrates a major difficulty of administering public education in Mobile. In the present climate proposals that might elsewhere be interpreted as educationally sound become sinister and suspect. To fire an incompetent black teacher solely on the basis of his incompetence would be difficult for Mobile school administrators to justify, precisely because other black teachers, not incompetent, have been discriminated against solely on the basis of race. To discipline a black youth bent on violence for the sake of violence might become a *cause celebre* because other black youths whose only crime is the color of their skin have been presumed guilty until proven innocent and treated accordingly. In brief, Mobile's raw racism has come home to haunt whatever attempts it might now want to make toward quality education for all and for simple justice. Sadly, the evidence indicates that the city does not want to make many such attempts.

Mobile's Credibility Gap

Throughout the year there have been frequent fights between white and black youths resulting in student suspensions and dismissals, mostly of blacks. Dr. Collins said he hoped to deal with the education of such students through a proposal that, subject to school board approval, would open a school that is now closed for use by students "with disciplinary problems." No diploma would be awarded and the students would be "encouraged to seek employment of their own liking," according to the memorandum outlining the program—which he willingly shared with an SRC representative in January. The program called for no more than 150 students to be in the school at one time, in classes of 15 each. Such a proposal, has obvious discriminatory potential. For who is to define students with "special disciplinary problems"? The mother of one black student likely to be so identified recently told of her son's experiences with the education department's disciplinary committee. Following an altercation between whites and blacks in one school, her son had been identified by a white girl as being involved. He denied it. The next day the mother kept the youth at home, but while she was away buying groceries, the police came and took her son away to jail. She could not raise bond. He stayed in jail two weeks. When his hearing came he was easily acquitted in an appearance before a county judge, when the witness said he was *not* involved. But he had to appear before the school board's disciplinary committee, which after questioning the youth at some length, concluded that he could not be re-admitted to school in the current term. His mother asked them why and they said it was because his grades were so low that he was not likely to graduate.

At Murphy High School it also seemed likely that numbers of black youths might be identified as having problems sufficient to warrant their being transferred to the disciplinary school. In a conversation with the white principal it was evident that the violence at the school last September

which resulted in a threatened walk-out by white teachers and which brought city police patrolmen into the school for a period of two weeks will not be soon forgotten.

"It was caused by Negro kids coming in and trying to take over. They were insolent and are still insolent to the teachers," the principal stated.

He seemed a worried man, still, taking little joy in his work. Walking along a dimly-lighted corridor he discovered that an electric switch was out of repair. "They've torn it up," he said. There was no exchange of words between him and a group of black students standing near the entrance to the school's machine shops. The students stood quiet, sullen. "We don't have many promising shop students," he remarked later.

But all seemed orderly now, it was pointed out. It was lunch-time. Students stood outside. There were no fights. "No," he said, "not right now." One could not help but feel a certain sympathy for the man, untrained as he apparently was in dealing with blacks at any educational level, a career teacher, middle-aged, a former physical education instructor, handling such a job as he had in such a school as Murphy, in such a city as Mobile. And one could feel the same sympathy for the students for the same reasons.

The whole scene at Murphy put into perspective a major problem of integration that is not Mobile's alone. Under the court order, Mobile students, black and white, have been uprooted from schools and environments, familiar places, familiar teachers, friends. This in itself is traumatic to young people for whom group identity is all important. Under the most ideal circumstances such changes would produce tensions and frustrations and thus the credibility of school administrators would seem absolutely essential to any reasonable approach to relieving the situation. Such credibility is lacking in Mobile because of actions in the past and in the present school year to avoid school desegregation at any cost. It is also lacking because of the students' experience in a white-dominated society where blacks historically have been systematically discriminated against. It is this awareness, this past knowledge combined with the uprootings from old environments, the harsh realities of the new and the current of separatist thinking from some black leaders that have brought large numbers of Mobile Negro students to feel they would be better off in all-black schools. "How can you have integration," a black student asked a Southern Regional Council representative, "when the white man is on the top of the pole? He controls everything, he's the head of everything, and he owns the power structure and we're at the bottom of the pole. We aren't equal in the white man's eyesight."

A militant black organization in Mobile called STEP (Steps Toward Educational Progress) feels that black students would not only be better off in all-black schools but also in all-black school districts controlled by an all-black school board. In the present school crisis STEP and another black civil rights organization NOW (Neighborhood Organized Workers) have emerged as vocal spokesmen for Negro aspirations in the city. NOW, an affiliate of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, organized

in 1965, has been active in a number of other civil rights issues, including protest demonstrations against the city's employment practices during the Junior Miss Pageant of 1969. STEP, of more recent vintage, has gained attention largely because of its proposal regarding separate school districts. Some controversy surrounds the origins of the group which was founded by Roy Innis, director of CORE. Innis reportedly conferred with federal officials prior to launching the organization in Mobile. The organization's decentralization proposal, articulated in a public speech last summer, drew the approval of white segregationists in Mobile and has appealed to many black students who feel that the proposal, whether practical or not, does speak to the real problem of education and integration of Mobile blacks, spotlighting as it does the present lack of power blacks have to affect decisions of the school board.

Yet integration has not been without educational benefits for black students though they have come indirectly and in ways that Mobile could not look to with pride. At schools formerly attended solely by Negroes but now having sizable white enrollments, the new school year brought better textbooks and new classroom equipment.

"A truck pulled up to my school one day," a black principal who now heads a school with a large percentage of whites recently said, "with aids and equipment I didn't even know were coming."

Observers of schools with low white enrollments say that no such windfall has come to the still-predominantly black schools. Improvement of facilities at a school with increased white enrollment was reported in one case soon after the election of a white PTA president. Beneficial to Negro students or not, incidents such as these increase black resentments, illustrating as they do the school board's apparent indifference to the education of black students.

The Stifling of White Leadership

The root causes of Mobile's education problems lie in the weakness of the city's white leadership. White moderates are mostly underground and have been so for many years. Prior to the initial desegregation of Mobile schools in 1963 an all-white organization known as ABLE (Alabamians Back Local Education), made up largely of middle-class housewives, came into being for the purpose of continued uninterrupted free public schools. By the nature of its goal the organization inevitably served as a counter force to Citizens Council agitation against the impending school integration and for this reason came under heavy criticism from many right-wing elements in the city, including the American Legion. Gov. George Wallace publicly denounced the group as having "total integration" as its design. Local state representatives called on the state legislature to investigate the group. Although the investigation never materialized and such criticism had little immediate effect on ABLE, white moderate leadership in the city was dampened by the extreme reaction to what was really a modest effort on the part of a few whites simply to keep the schools functioning and open. Many observers believe that the experience of ABLE is still

felt among whites of good will who might now be in position to influence school board decisions, but fear repercussions.

With the exception of a statement by the Chamber of Commerce asking for good will in a time of crisis last year, and supporting public education business leadership in Mobile has not taken a visible role in recent developments. Yet one white leader who asked not to be identified by name or occupation talked of his behind-the-scenes efforts to involve powerful black and white leaders in trying to solve some of the problems between black and white students. He spoke of confidential telephone calls and gingerly-stated overtures—a strategy recalling that of cautious white moderates in other localities a decade or more ago. Mobile whites aren't ready for more, he said, and gravely warned that to reveal more details of his efforts would be to jeopardize all attempts at meaningful biracial cooperation in the city. What he seemed not to realize was that a large and growing segment of Mobile blacks are no longer interested in biracial cooperative efforts that have to be so clandestinely arranged. When this was pointed out to him, he shook his head. "It just can't be too late for such efforts," he said, "It just can't be."

There is some precedent in the city for businessmen's reluctance at being too openly identified with efforts at racial cooperation. A former Mobile businessman, for instance, recalls that after a *Wall Street Journal* article appeared several years ago telling of the city's attempts to bring about an accommodation with civil rights complaints, business leaders who were identified, and some who weren't, were hounded by segregationist groups to the extent that an economic boycott on the business of one such leader resulted in severe financial losses. "They were scared after that," he said, "too scared to do anything at all."

Contributing to the dearth of white leadership has been the consistently negative posture on civil rights matters followed by the city's two daily newspapers. Neither paper could bring themselves editorially to condemn the Birmingham church bombing of 1963. In 1964 they carried a series of stories on the then-pending civil rights bill which most observers think was designed to increase local opposition to the bill. The Citizens Council, in fact, distributed copies of the articles not only in Alabama but throughout the country. During the mid-1960s the papers carried a daily column by a John Birch Society lecturer and sometimes cited the extreme right-wing publication *Human Events* as if it were an objective, reliable news magazine. Comments from two editorials prior to the opening of schools in September, 1970, illustrate the papers' position today.

> —When Earl Warren vacated the chief justiceship, he left the Supreme Court with its work cut out for it in dealing with the confusion and contradiction produced for public education during his tenure.
>
> —When the 1970-71 school year begins, parents throughout the Mobile County school system should protect the communitywide tradition of having a citizenship fully and steadfastly mindful of the value of law and order.

Aside from the papers' editorial position, civil rights advocates say the papers emphasize and blow out of proportion all racial incidents in newly integrated schools in order to inflame white reaction as much as possible.

In other stories and editorials the newspapers have blamed low morale of teachers and students on the numerous federal court rulings which are made to seem high-handed and capricious. There is little editorial criticism, however, of Judge Daniel Thomas who, by any accounting, is most responsible for the delays in bringing about an end to dual schools in Mobile. To demonstrating white students in the fall of 1970 he was a figure worthy of hanging in effigy for his ruling—made only after earlier decisions in favor of freedom-of-choice had been overturned—taking them out of their neighborhood schools. To almost everyone else, however, it is obvious that he has yielded to pressure from white segregationists. His own sympathies, as a matter of fact, are no judicial secret. He has publicly stated before an unprecedented gathering of indignant white parents in his court last summer that he disagrees with desegregation laws. "For nine years," he said, "I have fought this thing and tried to slow it down." Such an admission made in a time of strife and turmoil by the arbiter of justice in a city increasingly polarized would seem to have served no purpose other than to absolve Judge Thomas from the ill-will of white Mobilians.

The Essence of Survival

The United States Supreme Court now has the Mobile case under consideration. Its ruling, hopefully, will clarify any remaining doubts as to the legal demands of school desegregation in that city. But it might not. The high court could return the case to Judge Thomas for futher hearings on the evidence, on matters of fact. The whole process of litigation could thus be stretched out for many more months. In the meanwhile, Mobile waits. Desegregation has come and no one is really satisfied with it. The violent encounters between black and white students—the most recent occurring on February 12, 1971, at Vigor High School in Pritchard—have greatly raised the anxieties of parents of both races.[5] In such incidents there is a dilemma for all committed to the principle of integrated education. And it may well be that in the handling of these matters the success or failure of integration depends. Solid efforts by white and black parents working together in some kind of human relations context would seem to be essential. Emotions stirred by Governor Wallace, the local news media and actions of the school board and the presiding judge, however, have so widened the gap of racial understanding in Mobile that efforts at racial reconciliation today seem almost Quixotic.

But despite the fights and the traumas, the negative expressions of white and black students toward the experience of integration, most Mobile

[5]The incident at Vigor High began as a fight between two teen-age girls, one black and one white. It quickly escalated. One hundred policemen were called to the scene. Mace was sprayed on students. Eleven blacks and five whites were arrested. A black girl was charged with assault and battery; the others with disorderly conduct. Classes were suspended indefinitely at the school.

students are not juvenile delinquents bent on trouble. They are young people in the formative stages of their lives; their present attitudes are not inflexible. The experience of integrated education has been harder for them by the willful acts of adults who never wanted integration to work in the first place. If there is hope for the future in Mobile it is that the students will somehow, still, make it work. It seems a slender hope for all it is, finally, is the simplest essence of survival after all else has been shattered through the years of delay, manipulation of people, of injustice and cowardice. In brief, it is the ability to adapt, to accept reality, to grow. It is a certainty, too, that the students can not do any worse at building a community than their parents. Given encouragement, given support, they may do far better.

BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA:

THE NEW BREED and the OLD

By Betsy Fancher

When Austa French, a member of that band of bright, liberated yankee school marms, Harvard graduates and Unitarian preachers who made up the Port Royal Experiment, arrived in Beaufort, S. C., in 1862, she wrote that, "there steals over you the feeling that you are passing under a great cloud of accumulated wrongs, in which you seem mysteriously implicated, the vague feeling that you yourself have done something awful, somewhere in the dim past. . . Slavery is written upon the shore, the trees, the sky, the air. . . The enormous black hawks, with their screams, seem to be its very spirit. No wonder they caw, caw, over this land—mean vultures, waiting for blood."

The "Gideonites", as they called themselves, had come to minister to the Port Royal slaves, abandoned by their masters after the Confederate Fort Walker was overrun in a massive Federal amphibious invasion. Their mission, according to the New York National Freedman's Relief Association, was to teach the Negroes (then labeled "contrabands") "civilization and Christianity . . . order, industry, economy and self-reliance; and to elevate them in the scale of humanity by inspiring them with self respect."

The Port Royal slaves were the first in the South to be freed, the first to be educated, and they produced one of the first legitimate war heroes, Robert Smalls, who captured a Confederate gun-boat after the firing on Fort Sumter, delivered many of the Port Royal slaves to federally-held Beaufort, rallied the Sea Island blacks to join the Union troops and went on to become a National Guard general and a politician who forged enlightened legislation in fields ranging from economics to education.

The End of Freedom-of-Choice

The specter of slavery still haunts Beaufort and the barrier islands. The education of blacks, launched with such high hopes by Yankee school marms like Laura Towne, whose little hay loft school has grown into the Penn Community Center, is still a burning issue. In the spring of 1970 a

federal hearing examiner, acting on HEW complaints that freedom-of-choice had not resulted in substantial school desegregation, recommended that federal funds to Beaufort County be withheld. The school board, waiving its right of appeal, agreed to HEW recommendations for the school year 1970-71 which called for a 50-50 black-to-white faculty ratio and a geographic zoning plan for students.[1] But in January, 1971, an HEW investigative team reported that the district was not in compliance on faculty integration percentages, pointing out that blacks represented 79 per cent of the faculty at St. Helena Junior High; 70 per cent at St. Helena Elementary; 73 per cent at Michael E. Riley and 29 per cent at formerly all-white Beaufort Junior High. As a result of HEW's recommendation, Beaufort presently is in danger of losing between one and two million dollars in federal school aid. The chances, however, of funds actually being terminated are remote for HEW has seldom used this method of enforcement in the past year and a half.

Both blacks and whites, interviewed by the Southern Regional Council last summer, were apprehensive about what might happen when schools opened in the fall. Some were predicting an outbreak of violence or at least a school boycott by blacks, angered at the reduction of Robert Smalls High to the status of a junior high school, and the demotion of black principal Jacob Richardson. Black parents were also embittered at the renovation of the school to accommodate white students which they felt was proof positive of the school board's previous indifference to the education of blacks. Moreover, the school board introduced double sessions at previously all-white Beaufort High to accommodate the sudden influx of blacks many of whom had to be bused as much as fifty miles from the outlying islands past their old schools, schools whose songs, trophies, cheers and traditions were a part of their heritage. Other sources of discontent among blacks included earlier defeats of bond issues designed to finance a new high school at Beaufort and delays in submitting another such issue to the voters during the present school year. Many white parents, meanwhile, apparently have made other school arrangements for their children. White enrollment in Beaufort's public schools declined from 4,490 in 1969-70 to 4,210 in 1970-71. (Whites who have enrolled their children in segregated Beaufort Academy seem to belie the fear of busing heard from other quarters this year. Many of their children are transported as much as 100 miles a day to the unaccredited private academy some of whose faculty members do not meet South Carolina's teaching requirements.)

The Pat Conroy Incident

One single event in the current school year illustrates much about both the quality of education blacks have received in the past and the educa-

[1]Beaufort presented a thorny problem. The charming historic town with its columned mansions, patterned gardens and Revolutionary arsenal is ringed by a half dozen islands, ranging from all-black Daufuskie to all-white Fripp Island. The school board's plan required extensive busing and combined children with backgrounds as diverse as the Gullah communities on St. Helena's Island to children who had come of age on Hilton Head Island, a planned community which boasts the largest concentration of "Who's Who" listees in the country.

tional atmosphere in which Beaufort teachers and students must function today. This was the firing of Pat Conroy, a popular white teacher at Daufuskie's tiny two-room elementary school, who was discharged for alleged insubordination. Twenty-five year old Conroy started his second year on Daufuskie in September. The school board, overlooking the miracle his innovative teaching methods had worked in raising the grade levels of his black students, criticized his transportation costs to the island. The little boat he navigated, often through hazardous waters, was expensive to maintain, they said. On September 21, Conroy took a week's leave from the classroom to serve as a consultant to the Desegregation Center at the University of South Carolina turning over his lesson plans to a VISTA worker he had enlisted as a substitute teacher. He was fired on his return and the Beaufort County school board turned a deaf ear to the labored and eloquent petition by the mothers of Daufuskie, pleading for Conroy to be reinstated. He was, they said, the only good teacher their children had ever had. After Conroy's unsuccessful suit to be reinstated, Beaufort blacks were convinced that school officials, headed by Superintendent Walter Trammell, had no regard for the quality of education their children were receiving. Second-rate facilities and a second-rate education, long accepted in mute despair, suddenly became a heated issue to them.

In firing Conroy Dr. Trammell explained to the news media that as a young teacher he was an idealist and innovator much like the Daufuskie teacher.

Dr. Trammell took the school superintendent's post at Beaufort in 1968 after an impressive 30 years in public education. He gave up a promising career in the textile industry to go into public schools "to dedicate my life to helping the children of South Carolina."

Discussing education he disarms the interviewer with a shrewd, appraising glance over half-glasses and the inarguable logic of his doctrine of a "democratic education," a doctrine which some staffers will tell you is belied by "his iron fist." "The reason I took action with Mr. Conroy was that he was not in the school room teaching. It was that he ignored school policies, deliberately disregarded the written procedures."

The written procedures he spoke of he developed as an undergraduate student at Columbia and still keeps carefully bound in a manila envelope on his desk.

George Trask, the lawyer who represented Conroy in his unsuccessful suit to be rehired, says, "This is definitely the case of creative individual who has run afoul of the system and the system is not flexible enough to accommodate him."

"You Learn a Lot on the Bus"

A visitor to Robert Smalls Junior High School will find black and white students mingling on the playground, engaged in talk, tossing a ball, laughing together. Black students Brenda and Cynthia Holmes, Jo Ann Grinkley, Deborah Jones and Stanley Hayes, eager, open and confident, talk freely about integration. Their white colleagues? "Nice kids, most of them." Busing? "We ride with the white kids and talk a lot and some

of the buses have radios and we listen to music. It's fun. You learn a lot on the bus." Incidents of violence? Sure, a few scuffles after football games, but these are old school rivalries. And the school itself—the temporary buildings and the reeking dump heap beside the play ground? "It does smell bad on damp days," grants one student, "but they're covering it over with sand and things are getting better." The conversation is cut short by two assistant principals who explain firmly and with obvious anxiety the tedious process terminating at the desk of school superintendent Walter Trammell by which visitors are allowed to speak to students in Beaufort's schools.

The impact of black students on formerly all-white Beaufort High can best be documented in the mimeographed pages of the *Daily Planet,* an unofficial newspaper published by a dedicated group of black and white students. The initial issue, published Wednesday, October 28, contained an interview with Sumner Pingree, chairman of the Republican party in Beaufort County; a plan for reorganization of student government which would put the "do-nothing" student council under an activist steering committee; and an interview with Pat Conroy. "Education seems like a type of prison for kids," Conroy says. "And until this changes, I think teachers have the right and duty to criticize the administration or even themselves." A black student editorializes on Conroy's dismissal and the "calcified backbone of our present school system." Quotes from Spiro T. Agnew are countered by quotes from Senator Edmund S. Muskie, one of the *Planet's* heroes.

The *Planet* has grown steadily bigger, better, braver and more controversial indicating a creative ferment of ideas and opinion at the school which one black student described last summer as "scarcely human." The Christmas issue featured a thoughtful study of high school women. "Compulsory attendance," charges the author, means that students are subjected to the system's way of training people in capitalism—a system based on competition, status consciousness, conformity and unquestioning obedience to authority. For women students there is added oppression—"not only are they unequal because they are students, but they soon learn to know their unequal place as women, both academically and socially." The poetry is uneven, but often moving—"Tears of a thousand orphans; Victims of Vietnam. . . . Despair of a mother, without food, shelter or hope . . . young people in rebellion, marijuana, hash, dope." There is an inside view of ROTC, a diatribe against alcohol, some remarkably literate book and music reviews, an article in defense of dissent, another condemning legalized abortion and a half dozen letters from readers, hotly protesting prejudice against both black and white. "The black man is not begging, sister; he is demanding his rights," says one, and another, "We're not going to bend over backwards for blacks just because their skin is black. I feel like they're just like anybody else, NOT SOMETHING SPECIAL." Among the memorable quotes, there is one from Tricia Nixon: "It is amazing what (Agnew) has done to help the (news)

media—helping it to reform itself. You can't underestimate the power of fear."

The reader notices in the later editions of the paper little concern for integration as an issue. The problems that are still being hotly debated by Beaufort High parents—busing, double sessions, racial balance, HEW guidelines and the possibility of violence are seldom discussed in the *Planet*.

A Frozen System

There have been incidents, most of them unreported. A black student at Beaufort Junior High was arrested for using obscene language; a student at St. Helena's was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon and exonerated after he explained he'd just returned from a hunting trip. And there was a near riot after a rock festival at Robert Smalls which now has 1,200 students, 650 white, 550 Negro. But the most urgent concern of students, black and white, is quality education, also an intense preoccupation of their parents. At the heart of the matter is the definition of what education actually is. A *Planet* contributor, M. R. Kelly, puts it this way: "All the while, the elders are not realizing that if they would bend their sturdy old oak mentality in some sort of movement towards helping instead of hindering youth's progress, they would not be remembered badly. It all has to do with goals and objectivity. The youth wants to formulate change as their work. The elders wish a frozen system."

It is the inflexibility of this system which Beaufort youngsters are questioning with growing intensity. Meanwhile their parents are wrestling with other problems. Beaufort Academy (a private school) is expanding; a new and reportedly more farsighted and liberal head master has been hired and teacher requirements have been made more stringent. An off-duty policeman has been hired to stand guard over the Academy bus which is parked on one of Beaufort's picturesque streets, a bitter symbol of racism to Beaufort blacks. Mrs. Agnes Sherman, one of two Negro members of the school board, points out that the children are bused 50 to 100 miles to the school from resorts like Sea Pines and Fripp Island. "The Academy exists on a tight budget—it simply can not offer quality education," she says.

A recent meeting with Mrs. Sherman; John Gadsden, Director of Penn Community Center; Andrew Mariesett, field representative of the American Friends Service Committee; and lawyer Charles Washington revealed a growing disillusionment with integration. Under HEW it is administered "white style," they complained. "The ultimate decision is always made by the whites." They are skeptical of the proposed bond issue which would finance the new area schools, noting that there was already talk of a cut-back, of floating a smaller bond issue.

Washington says, not without bitterness: "The process of getting a unitary school system has destroyed black pride and identification. Our children are being forced to identify with white concepts." He cited the dress codes at Beaufort High as "just another weapon to control behavior."

John Gadsden claims that although schools are integrated, they still have white dominated administration. An example: Beaufort High, whose assistant principals are black and whose reigning principal is white.

Washington feels that integration is jeopardizing the sense of black identity established in the past ten years. "Black students have a gut feeling about this. The whites don't realize that most of Beaufort's history is black history." He feels that the whites, ranging from the freedom-of-choice advocates to the HEW administrators, have "gone about integration in the most cruel way. They've created a potential powder keg. As black identity and pride grows, violence could erupt in Beaufort schools. The system is too static. Inevitably it will crack and fall to pieces," says Mr. Washington.

He may be right. The atmosphere that pervades Beaufort today reminded one globe-trotting writer-photographer of the up-tight silence that pervades East Germany. The *Planet* reflects a growing discontent, but not with integration. While their parents continue to fight the battles of racism, integration and separatism, many young people, black and white, appear to have come to terms with integration. Says one poem in the *Planet:* "Love and peace, the teens new creed, is really true you see/there should be love and peace for people like you and me."

The students instead are questioning the whole system of education which *Fortune* editor Charles Silberman and others have criticized as joyless, oppressive to the questioning mind, destructive to spontaneity and "a sense of self." And with education, they are questioning every area of American life—the military, women's rights, politics, the arts, pollution, poverty, the competitive ideal. South Carolina already has a 50 per cent drop-out rate, many of them students who, having rejected the educational system, are dropping out of the mainstream of American life. In Beaufort, the rhetoric of violence, racism and separatism can be heard both in the drawing rooms of the affluent and the shanties of the poor. But these are the adults speaking. To many of their sons and daughters it is an antiquated and tedious refrain. For integration is producing a new breed of students in Beaufort, youngsters who are fighting for a flexible and innovative school system to meet the urgent challenges of a nation both torn by dissent and united by the powerful dynamics of an emerging and infinitely promising American ideal.

ATHENS, GEORGIA:

WHERE BUSING WORKS

By Horace N. Barker, Jr.

In October, 1970, when Clarke County, Georgia, was well into its second year of system-wide desegregation, lawyers for the school board appeared before the U. S. Supreme Court. Their mission was unique: to plead not for neighborhood schools, but to defend the school board's plan involving a generous amount of busing, against charges of "unconstitutionality" from a group of Athens parents and to plead for a reversal of a Georgia State Supreme Court decision which had supported the citizens' legal challenge.

Clarke County has completely desegregated its public schools in less than two years. The primary impetus for this sweeping transformation came from civil rights officials in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) who had threatened in the summer of 1969 to terminate over $300,000 in Federal funds if the county refused to comply with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Like hundreds of other southern school districts, adoption of a freedom-of-choice plan was the only step towards desegregation which the county had taken since 1954. By September, 1968, this plan had placed only 10 per cent of the county's black students in schools having majority white student populations. Several all black schools remained.

In October, 1968, HEW advised the Clarke County Board of Education that much greater student and faculty desegregation would be necessary for the 1969-70 school year. After months of study and negotiations, the board submitted a "Neighborhood Plan" to HEW on May 1, 1969. This plan would have increased the number of black students in predominantly white schools, but still would have left four elementary schools, a junior high, and a high school with all-black or nearly all-black student bodies. HEW said this plan failed to meet the requirements of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Greater desegregation was feasible, said HEW, and therefore, greater desegregation was required.

(This exceptionally strong stand by HEW, requiring desegregation of every school in the district, occurred in the early days of the Nixon Administration, six months before the resignations of Leon Panetta, former director of the Office for Civil Rights at HEW, and Paul Rilling, former director of HEW's regional Office for Civil Rights in Atlanta. Soon after these departures, HEW scrapped the administrative standards which Panetta and Rilling felt were required by Title VI and the Constitution. The agency then began to describe entire school systems as "desegregated"

even though some schools within the districts continued to have the same predominantly white or black student enrollments as in the "old separate but equal" days.)

Realizing that loss of Federal monies was intolerable, the school board submitted another plan to HEW on July 30, 1969. A week later HEW gave its approval.

The plan which was implemented in September, 1969, established a 20 to 40 per cent black student population in 11 of the 13 elementary schools. In the other two schools the black population was about 50 per cent. The plan meant busing approximately 200 more students than had been bused in 1968-69. Desegregation of the white and black high schools was set for September, 1970.

According to Clarke County Superintendent of Schools, Charles P. McDaniel, neither he nor the school board was happy about the increased busing. "But there was no other way we could comply with the law," he said. "For a half century we have been busing black students past white schools and vice versa to maintain segregation. Now we're busing to eliminate segregation."

When the plan was challenged[1] and, at last, brought before the Supreme Court, school board attorney Eugene Epting says he rather enjoyed his appearance. "Most school boards are up there complaining that they've been forced to do too much. But we went up there asking the Court to overturn the Georgia court and let us continue what we had already done."[2]

However strong may have been the initial reluctance of the Athens' school board to adopt a plan which would actually desegregate every school in the system, school officials now want to keep the plan. Don Hight, principal of Clarke County's high school, said a return to a neighborhood plan would be ". . . a serious setback for students and parents. Our schools could adapt themselves to the old ways, but it wouldn't be nearly as good."

No Place to Run

Superintendent McDaniel feels that the current plan is essential to the operation of a thoroughly desegregated system. "If you want desegregated schools, a neighborhood school plan simply wouldn't work here in Clarke County. It would mean we would have all-black and all-white schools . . . It would mean that parents would be moving around to get their kids in a predominantly white zone." McDaniel said the present system has helped to stabilize the community. "There's no place for anyone to run now."

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[1]The Athens suit raised two questions for the Supreme Court: (1) Whether the plan violated the constitutional rights (equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment) of students required to attend schools other than the school nearest their homes, and (2) Whether Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits a school district from operating a school attendance plan which involves the assignment of students to achieve a racial balance.

[2]Mr. Epting's personal feelings about desegregation are not necessarily represented by the plan he defended in Washington.

An Athens real estate agent affirms McDaniel's observation. "With a consolidated school system, it really doesn't make any difference which attendance zone people live in. They can be much less concerned about having to locate in the 'proper' zone."

McDaniel says the plan has helped to maintain the number of students in the public schools. He claims the county lost only about 100 students out of 11,500 to private schools in September, 1970, and less than 35 in September, 1969.[3] "With our plan there was no reason for parents to worry about sending their children to a 'bad' school. Now, everybody faces the same situation." He added, "The vast majority of the people have accepted what we had to do. All of them are not yet convinced it will work. We need some time to show them that it can and is working."

What would happen if the Supreme Court were to declare the plan unconstitutional? McDaniel said there would be some public pressure to revise the plan and go back to neighborhood schools. "An adverse decision would present unnecessary difficulties which we would rather avoid."

A black member of the school board, was less discreet: "We'll be in a hell of a fix if we lose it. Before you know it things would be just like they were before all this got started. It would be a bad situation. . . ."

The geography of Clarke County lends itself to a county-wide busing system. With only 125 square miles of rolling, woody, clay land it is the smallest of Georgia's 159 counties. Schools are situated in this area so that the longest one-way bus ride for any student under the present plan is five miles and normally requires a maximum of 35-40 minutes. The majority of students ride for about 25 minutes or less.

Over 51,000 of the county's 65,000 residents live in the "Classic City" of Athens[4], including 20,000 students at the University of Georgia. About 80 per cent of the county's total population and about 70 per cent of the elementary and high school age children are white. The county and city consolidated their school systems in 1956. Until January, 1968, the school board consisted of nine appointed members. At that time, the number was expanded to eleven, permitting the appointment of two black members.

Parents Response

Many, probably a majority, of the white adults who live in Clarke County still would prefer to send their children to neighborhood, segregated schools. The most frequently-voiced complaints of all parents concern irregular

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[3]There are three private schools in Clarke County. St. Joseph's, a Catholic parochial school founded over 20 years ago, has an enrollment of 218 elementary students, including 12 blacks. The Athens Academy is a college preparatory school with 325 students, all white, enrolled in kindergarden through grade 12. The Academy opened in September, 1967. The third school is Athens Christian Academy. Opened in August, 1970, it enrolls 130 white students from six counties in grades one through eight. Having complied with the Nixon administration's politically soothing paper policy of simply declaring "non-discriminatory admission practices," the latter school was declared tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service in January, 1971.

[4]So named by its own residents because of the presence of many Greek Revival ante-bellum homes built on large, four-acre lots and because of the university's location on a high hill overlooking much of the city.

bus schedules, poorly-trained drivers, early morning departure times, lack of discipline within schools, and in some cases, overcrowded classrooms. But whatever may be the deficiencies in implementing the current plan, there have been no major disruptions or acts of violence to support segregationists' claims that, "It would never work."

Contributing to the success and support of desegregated education has been a sizable group of white parents, including members of the University faculty, who believe that the present educational system is best for their children and their community. Although sharing many of the complaints about imperfections in the current operation of the schools, this group of adults believes that the sacrifices made during this transitional period will be more than justified by the public benefits derived from providing every child with an equal educational opportunity through integrated education.

Typical are the comments of Howard Schretter, a school board member and 14-year resident of Athens with three children in the public schools: "Let's face it, the present generation of children are up against it, especially the most gifted children. Desegregation means that the teacher must spend more time with those that are behind in reading and other skills. . . . But I think it's more important to have a child learn something about human relations, to be exposed to a variety of people than to learn a little bit more than anybody else . . . . "

Schretter also said he wouldn't hesitate to send his children to private schools if they were subjected to bodily harm at public school. "If a kid's life is in danger, then integration is not worth it. But we're in no danger of reaching that point here. In fact, considering the mess we've made of things in the past, I'd have to say things are going pretty well now . . . "

One white, liberal middle-class parent said that, much to his chagrin, his son in the fourth grade had begun to develop a negative attitude toward his black classmates from the ghetto, describing them as "nuisances" and "troublemakers." The father hoped for a change in his son's attitude before the end of the school year.

Another white parent said that his son and his son's white friends in a junior high school thought their black classmates were "sort of exotic." "I've noticed a tendency for some of the kids to admire and sometimes imitate the black kids. My son is even picking up a ghetto dialect . . . . He seems to be getting along fine."

A parent with a son in one of the two consolidated sixth grade schools said his son's education has not been damaged. "The . . . school is very good this year. But that's because of the principal and because it has some of the best teachers. It has nothing to do with integration one way or another . . . . " He also said that his son catches the bus at 7:00 every morning—when the bus is on time. He has driven his son to school two or three times because the bus failed to arrive.

Sending their children to school with blacks has come hard to many white parents. A professor at the University described the reaction of some whites confronted with desegregation on a personal level for the first

time when they took their first graders to school on opening day and met their child's new black teacher:

"Some of the parents were really shook-up. I remember that one mother in particular was terribly upset. She almost cried as she introduced herself and the child to the teacher . . . But she left her son in the room . . . didn't take him out. For people who've been taught all their life to be prejudiced, that took a lot of courage . . . .

"I know some people who use the word 'nigger' with all its derogatory overtones, but who've made a real effort to see that their children get along in the integrated schools. I suppose that gives some basis for being optimistic about the future . . . . The change in attitudes here over the last seven years has been incredible."

A special concern of black parents this year is an unusually large number of black students who have been suspended from school for one to three days. Many members of the black community see this as a disturbing indication of the considerable progress that needs to be made in interracial teacher-pupil relationships.

For example, one mother who has seen all of her ten children attend Clarke County schools said that many white teachers still fail to understand the language, feelings, and problems of young black children. She said it does most of the students ". . . . no good at all to send them home. That just encourages them to go ahead and drop out." She feels the school board is obligated to provide much more training for teachers in an ongoing intergroup relations program and to add well-qualified counselors to help students with personal as well as academic problems.

Several students and parents mentioned a need for an improved and expanded vocational training program. Superintendent McDaniel and other school officials indicated a willingness to invest more resources in this area as well as in areas of intergroup relations. But whether these kinds of problems will actually receive a higher priority in the future is an open question.

A group of about 78 parents, many from the comfortable neighborhood of University Heights initiated the court challenge to the desegregation plan. They charged the school board with unfair treatment since their neighborhood was the only area of the city from which white students were to be bused to a formerly black school. They also complained about the poor condition of the schools.

The school board responded by improving many formerly black schools with paved driveways, fresh paint, new blackboards. The board also modified the school attendance plan so that students from areas other than University Heights were to be bused to the school in 1970-71. (All schools now have a 20 to 40 per cent black student population.)

With these changes University Heights parents withdrew their support of the court challenge to the '69-70 plan. But other Athens parents, whites and blacks, carried the case through the courts and succeeded in getting the Supreme Court of the State of Georgia to declare the plan unconstitu-

tional. The school board appealed this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court which heard arguments in October, 1970.

One of the groups most inconvenienced by the present desegregation plan consists of the approximately 100 black children who live in Rock Springs Homes, a large public housing complex. Black parents from the area who were involved in the suit complained that children in grades one through five had to walk almost one and half miles to school, crossing heavily traveled streets. This is so because bus transportation is provided only for students who live more than a mile and a half from school. School officials concede that the restricted transportation is sometimes an imposition, but they point out that many white children are also required to walk the same distance as the black children from Rock Springs. To ease the safety concerns of parents, the school board has provided guards at the crossings but the matter remains one of concern to many black parents.

Merger and Dissension

The most serious disruption of education in Clarke County came last spring as school officials made plans for the September, 1970, merger of the all-black Burney-Harris High School (486 students) and the nearly all-white Athens High School (1529 students). As has been true in many other southern communities, some black and a few white high school students found it necessary to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with desegregation plans drawn up by school officials, most of whom were white. Marches, mass meetings, and other activities concerning the consolidation of the two schools occurred during April and May. Over 350 arrests were made. There was some minor vandalism and charges of police brutality, but no serious injuries were incurred.

During the demonstrations a predominantly black group of students presented a list of grievances to the school board. The grievances did not question the basic plan which made Burney-Harris serve all of the county's 10th grade students and Athens High serve 11th and 12th grade students. Rather, the demonstrating students were concerned with how the plan would be implemented.

The school board met with a student negotiating committee and formulated written, itemized responses to each issue raised by the students. Student leaders involved in the protest were satisfied with only one or two of the board's responses. Many of the board's answers were too general and evasive, according to the leaders.

The list of demands *per se* ceased to be an issue, however, after the board issued its written response and after the 1969-70 school year was completed. But some high school students feel that many of the issues are still not satisfactorily resolved. For example, the students wanted a black studies program implemented on a broad basis from elementary through secondary school. This year a black studies course, taught by a black teacher, is offered as a regular elective course at the high school. But some of the students in the course, while saying it was a "pretty good one,"

complained about a shortage of books. No special black studies programs have been included in the curriculum for elementary and junior high grades.

Another student concern last spring was the selection of colors for the new school. The problem appeared solved when one color was selected from Burney-Harris High and one from Athens High to form the new colors for "Clarke Central High." (This is the new name given to the secondary school system which includes the "Burney-Harris campus" and the "Athens campus.") However, the new football uniforms displayed the old Athens High color quite prominently but gave very little visibility to the old Burney-Harris color. (One Athens minister said this was typical of the "blundering, stupid, unnecessary mistakes of the white community which create bad feelings and makes our problem more difficult to solve.")

A third issue concerned the place of the Burney-Harris teaching and administrative staff in the new system. For example, the former principal at Burney-Harris High was made director of the Clarke County adult education program. (The principal at Clarke Central is white, while the assistant and building principals at the Athens and Burney-Harris campuses are evenly divided between whites and blacks.)

The most serious controversy in the merger of the two high school faculties involved football coaches. The black head coach at Burney-Harris was demoted to an assistant coach while the Athens head coach returned to his position. During the football season this situation produced considerable resentment of the part of the black football players who felt that the white coach was incapable of treating them fairly. Dissension among the black players could not be easily dismissed or overlooked by white school officials since several of the athletes not only were student leaders, but also the team's best players. (Two of them won football scholarships to the University of Georgia.)

One Monday, late last October, after the integrated Clarke Central team had lost its only game of the season, a group of black players refused to practice. They claimed that the head coach had unfairly blamed them for losing the game. The coaches and protesting students had a meeting, however, and the walkout ended the next day.

Some observers in Athens believe that the absence of more incidents like this during the season indicated a special effort on the part of coaches and players to establish mutual respect. But many of the black football players still strongly feel the need for a change in the attitude of the coaching staff.

One of them put it like this: "The head coach is wrong, he's wrong from his heart . . . . If there's anyway possible for him to straighten out, then things will work out, I believe. If they keep him, and he don't change, there won't be many black students playing ball . . . because they know what we went through. And besides, there may be trouble . . . ."

In contrast to the dissension which plagues the football team, other areas of the school's athletic program are much more satisfactory to all concerned. The basketball team is co-coached by the former Burney-Harris head coach and a coach from the former Athens High. Players said this

arrangement was working out well. As of the first week in February the team was undefeated and ranked among the top ten teams in the state.

The baseball team will have a black head coach.

Policies For Transition

The city of Athens and its schools have been free of major demonstrations since last May. The newly-named Clarke Central High School opened in September, 1970, without any disruptive incidents. Principal Hight said that many parents thought that the black and white students would never get along together. "Some parents believed the school would be blown off the map. It hasn't been. This doesn't mean we've done everything right. We've made some mistakes. But we have kept things together."

School officials have made some policy decisions that have resolved problems which continue to plague schools in other southern communities. For example, the dress code in effect this year in Clarke County schools permits considerable personal freedom in selecting the length of one's hair and the style of one's clothing. In roaming the halls and campus one sees many white students decked out in hippie-style outfits and black students with the most outstanding kinds of Afros and matching attire.

The playing of "Dixie", which has terrorized band directors and high school principals at other schools, is no problem at Clarke Central because the band stopped playing it a year before the schools were consolidated. Superintendent McDaniel says he likes it and considers it a fine song, "But," he explained, "we would prefer not to use it if it's going to offend some of our students and to cause dissension. We believe that helping students to get a good education is more important than stubborn adherence to tradition just for stubborness' sake."

One long-haired student, a member of the high school band who takes a great deal of pride in what he terms the progressive attitude of band members ("We've never had any problems admitting blacks"), said that band members themselves decided 'Dixie' wasn't worth playing if it got people all up tight." He found continued use of the song by the University of Georgia band rather juvenile. "They still play it at all the games. I wish they would grow up and realize they're living in the 20th century. They should set an example for us, not the other way around."

With the assistance of faculty members from the Department of Education at the University of Georgia, the high school is training some 17 students to work in biracial teams to lead "sensitivity sessions" on the dynamics of black-white relations with selected groups of junior high students. Initial meetings with student groups met mixed results. However, most students on the teams thought the meetings were worthwhile, but that the number of students involved was too small. What was needed, they felt, were many more school-sponsored opportunities for students to talk frankly and openly with each other about racial problems.

One student-initiated effort at promoting better understanding among students and between students and school administrators was the formation this year of a new club called "Union for Student Equality" (U-S-E).

The organization was started by a group of 10th grade students at the Burney-Harris building for the purposes of protecting the rights of students, acting as a mediator between students and faculty, and bringing students together on a social basis. USE has sponsored some community events, such as a Christmas party for Headstart children. It is trying to enlarge its membership and to secure financial assistance from HEW under the emergency school desegregation programs.

One of the more ominous new policies at the high school is the deployment of a half dozen security guards. They are all young men, uniformed, armed with a can of Mace for "self-defense". School officials claim they are there to guard against outside bullies and troublemakers. If this were the only reason they were there, one might expect to find them stationed only at the building entrances. But they in fact are found throughout the building.

Walter Allen, the black assistant principal at the high school, said that he at first had serious reservations about hiring the guards, primarily because of the potentially bad image they might have for black students. "I remember all too well," he said, "what, historically, policemen have done to me and most other black people. But now since they've been here for a while, they seem to be working out."

Student opinion of the guards is far from unanimous. Many students said they "didn't mind the guards being there", but thought they were unnecessary. Some black students said they got along well with the guards "except for one or two who try too much to assert their authority . . . ." Other students said the guards were needed to prevent incidents of extortion and bullying in the halls. Still other students expressed strong resentment of the guard's presence and felt they contributed to a repressive and tense atmosphere. However, barring a flagrant discourtesy or indiscretion by the guards, it appeared unlikely that their presence would precipitate a major incident.

The number of school-sponsored social activities at Clarke Central has been reduced considerably. The traditional fall homecoming dance was cancelled and only one other social event—a Christmas dance—has been attempted. The latter dance flopped partly because students considered ticket prices too high and partly because black students disliked the band.

School officials are proceeding cautiously in the area of social activities apparently to avoid a major incident of violence which would provoke an outcry from the white community. But many students expressed an interest in a greatly expanded social calendar. Students generally seemed much less apprehensive about the potential for trouble than did school officials and parents. One white student leader said school administrators could take necessary precautions against violence and could do much more to encourage antagonistic white and black students to cooperate in seeing that social functions were kept peaceful.

A black member of the student council offered this advice:

The thing that would help our school now more than anything

else would be for the administration to stop worrying about the black and the white and to start worrying about students . . . Treat everybody as students because that's what they are, really . . . and the situation would work out, *but they just don't believe it.* [emphasis supplied]

Interviewed for this report during the first week in February, high school officials readily agreed that an expanded social program was highly desirable. Principal Hight said, "It is now imperative that the school sponsor more social activities. Students are growing tired of administrators using 'integration' as a crutch for not doing anything. Everyone is much more accustomed to integration now and there's no reason why we can't hold generally all of the activities that the schools sponsored before they merged."

Student Reflections

Given the encouragement and opportunity, a vast majority of black and white students probably could do much more to relieve resentment and mistrust. The following experience of one black high school senior suggests the possibilities:

We were in this class together, another black guy and I, and we got into a discussion with white kids about the demonstrations of last spring.

Some of the white kids thought we did it because we were violent, and didn't like them and didn't like anything about them.

But we explained why we demonstrated. It wasn't for any reason of violence, not to cause violence. But that's the way it turned out . . . we had to demonstrate anyway.

We explained [to the white students] how we really thought about things. We sort of made them see the light, to see how we really felt. It wasn't that we didn't like them, but it was a cause we were fighting for.

Things won't get better until blacks and whites get to know each other as friends. That's what it takes.

The black seniors also articulated a determination to secure on a permanent basis the fundamental rights, respect, and civilities due them as American citizens.

One student, reflecting on part of the meaning of his heritage said:

I think some of the older white folks think that stuff [white domination] is still going to happen. But, I don't believe it's going to come about anymore . . . because I'd rather be dead than do what my foreparents did . . . .

When some whites come up to me now and, you know, try to holler at me and say do this, do that, demanding like, I want to retaliate . . . because I've heard many times before what my grandmother went through, and I just don't want to go through that. It's heartbreaking to know what she had to go through.

Another student:

> My mother and father, they tried to put me down, told me I was going to get in trouble because I talk a whole lot, speak my mind . . . but I say what I think because I don't mind. I told them that Martin Luther King said, 'If you don't have a cause worth dying for, you're not a man' and that's what I tell them . . .
>
> That's what they [white people] want Negroes to do anyway. Sit back and don't say anything. That's what happened to our parents. They were afraid to speak up . . . .

A third student, referring to the demotion of black teachers and principals when desegregation occurs:

> The Negro, he's been taking it for so long . . . he's tired, he's not going to take it anymore.

The Future in Athens

A biracial committee, consisting of students and faculty from the former Athens and Burney-Harris high schools, was set up three months before the April, 1970, protests to devise a mutually satisfactory way of implementing the desegregation plan. But one student, a member of the committee, reported,

> Students at Athens High wanted to be on it mainly because it was a big deal, a prestige thing, but they weren't really interested in communicating with the black students or in understanding how they really felt about having to give up their school . . . . Students' feelings should have had top priority, but they didn't.

Another observer who was involved in these early meetings also blamed black students from Burney-Harris for not taking advantage of this initial opportunity to express their opinions. "They gave us no indication of how they really felt or what they really wanted. Some of them didn't even attend some of the meetings because of basketball games . . . "

Rev. Frank Hutchison, however, white minister of the Athens United Presbyterian Church, sees the events of last spring as a logical consequence of a culmination of bigotry and ignorance on the part of much of the white community: "A lot of white people either didn't know or didn't care about the feelings of the black people, adults and students, who had strong emotional ties to their high school . . . ."

Many school and city officials in Athens do not deny that what happened last spring has made the white community more *attentive* to voices from the black community. The crucial issue, however, is whether the white community will be more *responsive* to the needs of the black community.

In the aftermath of the demonstrations several leaders in the black community spoke out against the failure of the "old Athens establishment" and the city administration to show any kind of genuine concern for the poor and problems of poverty. "The black people have not been heard," said Mrs. John T. (Jessie) Barnet. "There's a terrible lack of communications. The city seems blind to proverty."[5] When asked in

[5]Athens *Banner Herald*, May 31, 1970.

January, 1971, if the situation had improved, Mrs. Barnet replied, "Maybe it's a little bit better, but we'll just have to wait and see what happens. . . . "

Mrs. Miriam Moore is a black woman who has been quite skeptical of the concern of many white Athenians for the black community. (She calls herself a "pure-blooded Athenian" because she was born in the house where she still lives.) But Mrs. Moore sees some progress in Athens, particularly as reflected in the greater interest city officials have shown in the Athens Model City program.

Another reason for a slightly more optimistic outlook, Mrs. Moore said, is the election of 26-year-old Edward Turner to the Athens city council. He is the first black man to serve since the days of Reconstruction.[6] Turner sees a major benefit of his election as giving the black community an official voice for communicating with city officials. He said he has little indication that the city will make significant improvements in programs affecting the black community. "There's not much hope in one vote out of nine, but at least the black community will have a voice that they've never had before."

Turner emphasized that the problems in Athens involve " . . . not just improving the educational system, but raising immediately the socio-economic status of most of the students' parents. Athens needs a lot more decent job and housing opportunities for its black residents."[7]

One outgrowth of the demonstrations last spring was the establishment of the *United Free Press,* a mimeographed monthly newspaper published by a group of black and white citizens in an effort to fill a communications gap between the black and white communities. Founders of the paper say it was established " . . . due in large part to the apparent unwillingness of local newspapers and radio stations to report certain kinds of news, especially news which reflects discontent with the manner in which the public business of Athens is conducted."[8]

The paper has received a warm welcome in the black community and among students. Many black residents said the paper serves a very useful function in discussing events that the " . . . two establishment Athens dailies wouldn't touch." Continued publication of the *United Free Press* should make social injustices in Clarke County more difficult to ignore.[9]

One cannot responsibly predict that the school system will be free of major disturbances during the remainder of this school year. In Athens as in many other American communities, meaningful communication

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[6]Turner was elected from Athens' First Ward where 800 whites and 1175 blacks are registered. He defeated the white incumbent 645-571 in a runoff election after receiving the highest vote in a 3-man primary race.

[7]Only 8 per cent of the black labor force in Clarke County hold jobs classified officially as "white collar" positions, compared with 58.1 per cent of the white work force in these positions. 53.1 per cent of the county's blacks work in "service" jobs, compared with only 7.2 per cent of the white work force.

[8]*United Free Press* June 1, 1970, p. 1.

[9]In its second issue, (June 7, 1970) the *Free Press* noted "some improvement" in the "establishment" papers' coverage of events concerning the black community. Such improvements included a special eight-page feature section on "Black Athens: Triumph and Tragedy," wherein some black leaders were given an opportunity to express their ideas in public.

between white and black residents was breeched by a history of enforced patterns of racial segregation and discrimination. The legacy of that history continues to be a considerable amount of resentment, frustration, and mutual suspicion. But, through the physical desegregation of their educational system, the people of both races in Clarke County have created new significant possibilities for ending the destructive legacy and correcting past injustices.

Having taken this initial step towards giving all students, for the first time, an equal educational opportunity, school officials may find more time and resources to invest in expanding and revising the total educational program. The situation is now at the point where students and school officials can begin to confront problems more sophisticated and complex than simply placing black and white students in the same classrooms and buildings. The remaining problems, particularly at the high school and junior high schools, require a more energetic attack on feelings of mistrust, resentment, and social isolation. The present challenge is to create good-will, espirit d' corps, a situation where everyone feels that they are welcomed and "a part of the team."

Clarke County has the potential for operating one of the highest quality integrated school systems in the country. During the last decade its citizens consistently supported increased local spending for education.[10] Yet, only a small percentage of the county's available financial resources have been tapped. For example, local school revenue for 1967-68 represented only 2.2 per cent of the county's effective buying income of *$131.8 million. Less than one per cent* of the total property value of the county is being spent annually for school purposes. The people of Clarke County as a whole clearly have the ability to provide the additional financial support which will be necessary to maintain and improve their public education program.

Hopefully, there are enough people in the county who have achieved sufficient freedom from their personal prejudices and who have enough pride, determination, and patience to complete the social transformation they have initiated. Hopefully, enough people appreciate the progress that has been made and recognize the much greater progress that needs to be made so that Clarke County residents may provide, sooner than the people in many other communities, an opportunity for their children to learn to live together, acknowledging and developing the differences and similarities of their respective southern cultures.

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[10]Total current expenditures for 1968-69 were approximately 90 per cent greater than expenditures for 1964-65.

WHITE FLIGHT:

THE SEGREGATION ACADEMY MOVEMENT

By Kitty Terjen

The rapidly developing segregation academy movement in the South is an anomaly in the history of private education. Unlike parochial schools and the better private preparatory schools founded earlier in the century, the segregation academy tends to be academically inferior—accredited neither by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools nor by the states in which they operate. Although this year there is evidence that many private academies are moving from make-shift quarters into new prefab buildings, the caliber of teachers (many of whom came out of retirement to teach) remains sub-standard and the curriculum offerings, at best, are pale imitations of what is offered in the public schools.

Many of these new schools, with their underlying philosophy of "Never!", are a warping influence on the children who attend. Even aside from the implications of removing children to a segregated situation in a democratic country, it is important to note that many of these schools are motivated by an extreme right-wing philosophy which, in the name of "patriotism" and "quality education," is a perversion of the nation's ideals.

Private School Enrollment

For the 1970-71 school year, the Southern Regional Council estimates that 450,000 to 500,000 students attend private segregated schools in the 11-state South. Many of these are older private schools, not founded for the purposes of segregation but still without Negro students; others are the new segregation academies.

The Council estimated in October, 1969, that 300,000 students were enrolled in segregated private schools. After the Supreme Court's decision in October, 1969, to integrate schools "at once," the Council revised its figures upward to 400,000 students, based primarily on reports of the virtual abandonment by whites of the public schools in some areas of Mississippi and Louisiana. Since that time some whites have returned to the public schools and many of the older private schools have begun to integrate. The estimate of 450,000 to 500,000 students enrolled, therefore, represents an attempt to reflect these subtle shifts but tends to conceal the dramatic growth of the newer segregation academies. There is ample evidence that existing academies are adding grades and increasing enrollments and that a great many new academies were opened for the first time this fall.

Sources of information about the number of newer schools are fragmentary and in many cases uncertain. SRC estimates are based on the latest state records available, as well as HEW estimates and news stories.

State departments of education do not keep up with the phenomenal growth and do not usually separate the various categories of private schools. HEW estimates have proved inaccurately low. Despite SRC recommendations last year for better public records on the private school movement, up-to-date and accurate information is still not available.

State-By-State

Following is a brief state-by-state report on private school activity in the South last year:

—Alabama: The latest figures available from the state department of education are for the year 1968-69, when 39, 214 pupils reportedly were enrolled in 191 private schools of all types (including post-secondary) in the state. The only up-to-date figures available on this state are those provided by Allen Cleveland (an Auburn University graduate student), who made a survey of the non-sectarian private schools in the state last spring. He found, by interviewing school superintendents, that as of April, 1970, there were 83 non-sectarian private schools in operation in the state and that 43 would open in September, 1970. After his survey was made, Cleveland discovered an additional 20 schools which planned to open in the fall of 1970, bringing the total of new schools this year to about 65.

"I anticipated in April that 20,500 pupils would attend private schools in September. My guess now is that it is closer to 35,000," Mr. Cleveland said in January. He added that his survey did not include private schools set up in churches to avoid segregation and he indicated there were a large number of schools so situated in Alabama.

The survey, which Mr. Cleveland conducted as part of his Ph.D. dissertation at Auburn University, indicates that private school enrollment in the state has more than doubled since 1964. In addition, his study concludes that in many instances the newer the school, the lower its enrollment and tuition the more likely it is to be lacking certain elements which constitute "quality education."

—Arkansas: The department of education was having trouble keeping up with the growth of private education as a whole in the state so it quit keeping statistics in 1968. However, the *Arkansas Gazette* reported that enrollment in segregation academies—not counting older private schools and parochial schools—rose from 405 in 1969 to 2,348 in 1970. The number of such schools tripled during the year.

—Florida: This state has traditionally had a greater percentage of its school-age population enrolled in private schools than have other states in the South, but it was not believed until last year that there was any significant enrollment in segregation academies. Newspaper reports in the last year, however, reveal that there is an academy movement in that state and it is growing. During 1969-70 there were 396 private schools of all types in Florida with a total enrollment of 109,478 students. The state department has made a conservative estimate of five per cent growth this year.

—Georgia: No official statistics are kept, but an unofficial state department survey, which is incomplete, suggests that this year there are 224 private schools in the state, 144 more than there were in 1967. Enrollment this year is estimated to be 50,078 students, an increase of almost 40,000 since 1967.

—Louisiana: According to the state department of education, 165,000 students are enrolled in private schools this year, 12,380 more than the previous year and 15,152 more than 1964. The growth in Louisiana is exceptionally large but it does not show up clearly in the figures because of a concurrent drop in parochial school enrollment which is part of a national trend due to rising costs and shrinking financial support of Catholic schools. (Louisiana has a larger Catholic population than any other Southern state.)

—Mississippi: The most dramatic and most publicized growth of the academy movement has occurred in this state. This year, according to state figures, 62,676 pupils are enrolled, an increase of 43,278 students since 1964. State figures on the number of private schools are contradictory. This year the state reports 197 private schools in operation, although last year it reported 256 such schools. Newspapers document a continued growth from 1969, so an estimate of 275-300 schools would probably be accurate for the current school year.

—North Carolina: This is one of the few Southern states which attempts to keep full and current records on the private schools within its boundaries. It even has a paid coordinator of non-public schools. North Carolina has witnessed a steadily increasing private school enrollment, from 18,721 students in 1964 to 36,470 students in 1970-71, an increase of approximately 18,000. Eighty-one private schools have been created in the state since 1964, 31 in the last year.

—South Carolina: The department of education estimates that 35,000 students are enrolled in private schools this year, 9,000 more than last year and approximately 17,000 more than in 1964. The number of private schools also has risen sharply, from a reported 78 in 1964 (there were 48 in 1954) to 139 in 1969-70. The membership in the segregationist South Carolina Independent School Association has risen to 60 member schools this year, compared with 31 in mid-1969. Officials of that organization say there are many more operating in the state which are too inferior in quality to be members.

—Tennessee: The state does not keep private school statistics (except for those few—37 in 1969-70—which voluntarily request state approval) and public school enrollment figures show no significant decrease this year. Observers at the Race Relations Information Center in Nashville feel the segregation academy movement in Tennessee has been limited.

—Texas: The state department of education did not respond to SRC inquiries in time for inclusion in this report. HEW estimates that this year 57,000 are enrolled in private schools, a drop of almost 4,000 from the previous year. This drop probably reflects declining parochial school

enrollment, which is large in this state, and growth of segregated private education, if any, is not reflected.

—Virginia: The Old Dominion, a pioneer in the academy movement (Prince Edward Academy in Farmville has provided a model for other states), reports 56,304 Virginia residents enrolled in private schools this year, an increase of 5,847 from the previous year. The busing issue in Richmond and Norfolk has contributed to this increase.

IRS and the Academies

The signal event in the life of the new "segregation academy" movement during the past year, aside from its continued spread, was the Internal Revenue Service's decision on July 10 that it "can no longer legally justify allowing tax-exempt status to private schools which practice racial discrimination nor can it treat gifts to such schools as charitable deductions for income tax purposes." At first glance this new policy seemed a victory for civil rights advocates who had long argued for an end to indirect public subsidy, through the tax system, of private segregated schools organized deliberately to avoid public school desegregation. However, as the first favorable rulings were announced under the new policy, it became painfully clear that the IRS, in accepting "good faith" statements by the schools themselves as to whether they discriminate, was defeating its own stated policy.

According to Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Randolph Thrower (who since then has resigned from his position) the IRS is issuing favorable rulings "based on representations of fact made to us in writing by responsible officers of the school setting forth its admission policy and the publication of this to the public." He continued, in testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity in August: "Our whole basis of tax administration in this country . . . is based on trust. We assume a voluntary compliance . . . ."

To assume "voluntary compliance" on the part of Southern segregationists is to ignore realities that by now should be second nature to any federal official involved in civil rights enforcement. In the South, a simple statement by a private school that it is open to all regardless of race obviously will not be sufficient.

As of December 30, 1970, six months after announcement of the new policy, the IRS had not initiated revocation of the tax-exempt status of any of the estimated 17,000 to 18,000 private schools in the nation which already had tax-exempt status outstanding. (In Mississippi, the exemptions of 30 such schools were suspended, but this was under court order in the case of *Green vs. Kennedy and Thrower.*) Nor has the Southern Regional Council been able to ascertain that any of the 136 private school applications pending with the IRS as of July 10, 1970, have received unfavorable rulings.

Information and the Public

In an interview in December, Stuart Patt, an IRS spokesman, declined to say whether IRS had made even one unfavorable ruling outside the

Mississippi cases. "We don't make announcements on that," he said. "As long as schools are not exempt, they are taxpayers entitled to the same privileges under the law as all taxpayers . . . . We are prohibited by law from disclosing the affairs of a taxpayer."

This interpretation was rejected by the U. S. District Court of the District of Columbia when it ordered the IRS to make public the names of the 30 schools under its jurisdiction whose tax exemptions were suspended. Many believe that all such IRS rulings, favorable or unfavorable, are matters of public record.

The subject of private schools at the IRS is "so sensitive that we've been cautioned to follow correct procedures," Mrs. June Norris, acting chief of the rulings section, Exempt Organizations Branch, told a researcher who inquired about such information for this report. This "sensitivity" has led to equivocation by some members of the IRS bureaucracy. For example Mr. Patt declined to supply an SRC researcher the list of *136* schools whose applications for tax exemption IRS Commissioner Thrower said were pending July 10, 1970. "Until they receive the exemptions, we can't disclose anything about them," Patt said. However, the IRS did supply the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity a list of *137* private schools with applications pending as of August 7, 1970, and the list was published in the record of the hearings which are available to the public.

To further confuse matters, the IRS, after announcing in Washington the names of the first seven schools which received favorable rulings, began with the eighth favorable ruling to make announcements only at the district-office level. There are 58 districts. Furthermore, rulings on the 17,000 to 18,000 private schools with exemptions outstanding will be made at the district level, according to Terry Gastell of the IRS Public Information Office in Washington. He said he did not think the names of schools approved or disapproved on review would be available in Washington. "We will probably have some statistics," he said.

The IRS, then, is giving no assurances at this time that information regarding any of its rulings, favorable or unfavorable, will be made available to the public generally. Without such information a meaningful evaluation of the effects of the new IRS policy on private school tax exemption will be all but impossible.

Favorable Rulings

As of December 2, 1970, a total of 58 private schools had been granted advance assurance of tax exemption by the IRS. The Southern Regional Council was able to obtain a copy of this list from the IRS in Washington. Of those schools granted favorable rulings, nine were in Mississippi and under jurisdiction of the federal court in the *Green* case. (Eight of these schools are awaiting decision by the court on an appeal by the plaintiffs, who contend that the schools, despite their declaration that they have a non-discriminatory admissions policy, are "part of a system of private schools operated on a racially segregated basis as an alternative to white

students seeking to avoid desegregated public schools." The ninth school, the Saints Academy in Lexington, is integrated and its exemption was not challenged by the plaintiffs.)

Of the 49 private schools outside Mississippi which have been granted tax exemption, one school, the Pinewood Christian Academy in Claxton, Ga., does not appear on the list of 137 private schools with applications pending August 7 (as listed in the committee hearings). Nor were the names of the first seven schools which received IRS approval on July 19 on the list supplied to the Equal Educational Opportunity Committee by the IRS. It is very difficult, therefore, to determine whether the IRS is presently issuing rulings only on those schools whose applications were pending at the time of the policy change or whether the IRS is adding, and approving, private schools. Furthermore, current IRS policy makes it impossible to determine which schools with applications pending, if any, have received unfavorable rulings.

Violations

Shortly after the first six IRS exemptions were announced, Mrs. Ruby Martin of the Washington Research Project testified before the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity that at least three of the six private schools granted exemption fit "the classic pattern of the segregation academy." At later hearings before this committee, the IRS commissioner said: "We have not at this time made an effort to determine the motivation for the formation of the seven schools about which you specifically requested." Adding that decisions were "prospective" and that the IRS was giving all schools ample opportunity to "conform," Thrower refused to be convinced that a school which was organized to avoid public school desegregation and which remained segregated should be judged on those grounds. "I am not willing," he said, "to make the assumption that assurances given us in writing by the leaders of any institution will represent a farce and a fraud. If any are, we want that called to our attention."

Sen. Walter F. Mondale, chairman of the committee, called to Thrower's attention the following evidence provided by Robert Valder of the Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.:

> . . . . The information contained below was obtained by Mr. Ernest Johnson, a black resident of Alabama . . . .
>
> Mr. Johnson went to Newnan, Ga., at my request to obtain certain information about Heritage School on July 31 and August 1, 1970. Mr. Johnson first talked to two black residents of Newnan who wish to remain anonymous. One of the residents told Mr. Johnson that the Newnan City Council, in a meeting during the summer of 1969, had discussed methods of 'keeping the niggers out of' the Heritage School. One method discussed during that meeting was to charge excessively high tuition.
>
> In order to get the most complete information possible, I had asked Mr. Johnson to attempt to obtain an application form for

this school. Accordingly, Mr. Johnson decided to ask a black parent to go to the office of this school and say that she was thinking about enrolling one of her children in the school. She refused because she said she had seen an article in the local paper during the summer of 1969 which stated that this school was for 'whites only.' Mr. Johnson went to the local newspaper office in an attempt to locate that article, but was told that newspapers were not retained in that office for that length of time. Mr. Johnson then went to the school's office and talked to Mr. George H. Keller Jr. who is headmaster.

Mr. Johnson told Mr. Keller that he was thinking about enrolling his child in this school and would like to obtain an application form and any other relevant information. Mr. Keller told Mr. Johnson that at the present time no Negroes had applied to enroll their children in the school but that Mr. Johnson could make such an application if he had $750.00 'in your ass pocket.' Mr. Keller did give Mr. Johnson an application form and information about tuition costs. Mr. Johnson said Mr. Keller's general demeanor towards him was 'nasty and hostile.'

Mr. Keller also told Mr. Johnson that if his children were enrolled they would have to be 'clean and decent.'

Enclosed is a copy of the application form for this school. It should be noted that references are required; obviously such a requirement would act as a deterrent should any black person have the desire to attempt to enroll his child in this school . . . .

Enclosed are Xeroxed copies of clippings from the Newnan *Times-Herald*. The clipping dated July 9, 1970, does not state that this school is open to blacks. One of the clippings dated July 16, 1970, does make such an indication. The implication being that suddenly this school became open to black students . . . .

Commissioner Thrower rejected the deeply distrubing allegations in Mr. Johnson's report. He preferred to believe that the Heritage officials were acting in good faith. To the knowledge of SRC, the IRS has not yet investigated the Legal Defense Fund's complaints against the Heritage School.

While Thrower testified that he would welcome information from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, HEW Secretary Elliot Richardson later said that the burden of monitoring private schools will be on private citizens. He said Southerners who feel the private schools are discriminating can complain to the IRS or file suit.

Enforcement

The Southern Regional Council recently discovered that five of the six private schools in South Carolina which have been granted tax exemption as of December 2 are members of the segregationist South Carolina Independent School Association. The sixth school, the Union Academy, received advice at its inception from Dr. T. E. Wannamaker, a hero of the white Citizens Councils and a founder of the South Carolina associa-

tion, which has been closely aligned with the Citizens Councils organization. The Union Academy, according to one of its board members, intends to join the association in the near future.

One of the first schools to be granted exemption by the IRS under its policy is the Gaffney Day School. As early as 1966 this school was listed as a member of the South Carolina association and it is on record with the IRS as having "applied for membership in the South Carolina Independent School Association and this will be the accrediting agency." When the Gaffney School first appeared on the membership roster of the South Carolina association, Dr. Wannamaker, then president of the group, told the Columbia *State* and *Record* (July 10, 1966): "We're here because we have convictions—and we're going to stay. It's not token integration we're concerned about, but the effects mass integration will have on our schools in the future . . . . The immediate concern is this heavy ratio, the future concern is amalgamation of the races which takes three generations." In the past Dr. Wannamaker has indicated he believes in the inherent inferiority of Negroes and on one occasion he told the Washington *Post:* "I'm an old-time conservative. I believe it's heredity first and environment second. Many (Negroes) are little more than field hands."

The South Carolina Independent School Association's close relationship with the white Citizens Councils often has been kept in the background. As early as February, 1966, an article by Dr. Wannamaker entitled "Private Schools—Developments in South Carolina," appeared in *The Citizen,* the monthly publication of the Citizens Council, and his picture was on the cover. In June, 1969, William J. Simmons, administrator of the Citizens Council, told a New York *Times* reporter that "there are about 24 (private schools) in South Carolina, where the council-sponsored school system is called the Independent School Association . . . ." Later that year Mr. Simmons attended the annual convention of the South Carolina association at Hilton Head as an "observer." The Columbia *State* on December 15, 1969, reported: "The soft-spoken, easy-talking Mississippian said forthrightly that he isn't much impressed by some private school-men who emphasize the need for quality education. He said, matter-of-factly, the root is school integration."

The five schools in South Carolina which have been granted favorable rulings by the IRS, despite their membership in an association which has linked arms with the white Citizens Councils and which in earlier days espoused segregation openly but which now couches its beliefs in terms of "quality education", are:

> The Gaffney School, Gaffney; Holly Hill Academy, Holly Hill; Thomas Heyward Academy, Ridgeland; Coastal Academy; Myrtle Beach; Thomas Hart Academy, Hartsville.

(The sixth school, Union Academy, which received a favorable ruling from the IRS, plans to join the South Carolina association in the near future.)

Because of the new IRS policy, all these schools now have publicly espoused a non-discriminatory admissions policy and published it in a local newspaper (to satisfy an IRS requirement), something not all members of the South Carolina association are sure they are willing to do, even hypocritically. Hillyer Rudisill III, a ranking official in the South Carolina association, recently said he is wary of publishing a statement on non-discrimination in the local newspaper and then claiming that no qualified Negro has applied. Even that would be "capitulation" to the federal government, in his view. "If you said there were no qualified Negro applicants, some Yankee psychologist would come down and say the tests are culturally biased," he said.

Sentiments like these suggest the real spirit of the segregation academy movement. Commissioner Thrower, however, did not consider them relevant. It is his judgment that the IRS exemption rulings should be based only on officially published statements. This policy ignores the cynicism of the statements and the fact that they are designed to placate the IRS. "This policy," Thrower told the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, "makes available to all children, without regard to race, private education in the country which has the benefit of tax exemption. What we are assuring is availability, not attendance." Paper assurances, of course, do not insure availability and the IRS, in a recent attempt to recoup some of its credibility on the subject, told Atlanta *Journal* education editor Junie Brown that the July 10 ruling does not apply to such areas as "testing, grade requirements, high tuition and other technicalities to try to keep Negro students out while still proclaiming an open-door policy." Nor, obviously, does the IRS consider, as it hands out favorable rulings, the social and economic pressures of the white community—not to mention outright violence—which might face Negroes attempting to enroll their children in a private school in the South.

The Green Case

The ugly reality of the situation seems to have entirely escaped the Internal Revenue Service, but it has not escaped the plaintiffs in the *Green* case, who argued in December before the U. S. District Court in the District of Columbia that "the name of the game is paper compliance" to obtain tax-exempt status. The specific issue now before the court involves the eight schools in Mississippi which were granted favorable tax rulings by the IRS last fall. All eight have officially declared that they will accept applications from black pupils, but in none are blacks actually enrolled. One reason for this, an IRS lawyer argued, was that "none have applied."

The *Green* case is significant because it has ordered the IRS to "first affirmatively determine . . . that a school . . . is not a part of a system of private schools operated on a racially segregated basis as an alternative to white students seeking to avoid desegregated public schools." The judges, according to the Washington *Post,* "have made it clear that they were not entirely satisfied with IRS action to date." If the court requires the IRS

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to go beyond paper compliance in Mississippi, it will surely be forced to do so in the rest of the country. ("Or else Jim Eastland would scream," noted Frank Parker, who is lawyer for the plaintiffs.) If so, then surely most of the 57 favorable rulings issued as of December 2, 1970, would have to be rescinded.

Schools With Favorable Rulings Outstanding

According to IRS sources, a review of the estimated 17,000 to 18,000 private schools in the country with favorable tax rulings outstanding is still in process. "We really don't know very much about the admissions policy of these schools," IRS Spokesman Stuart Patt said. "We have sent out a questionnaire form to all schools we could possibly pick off our lists." Patt said the due date for return of these questionnaires was December 30, 1970. "Until the examinations branch has all of these questionnaires back and goes through them, we won't be able to undertake a full-scale examination in this area," he said. He added that no tax exemptions for private schools approved in previous years had been revoked as of December 30, 1970.

Unless the court intervenes, the IRS will probably continue its farcical acceptance of the written word. There is no evidence that the IRS has yet conducted field examinations or considered the racial constituency of the student body (an earlier criterion announced by the IRS, but later dropped from the record) of a private school seeking tax exemption. All evidence points toward satisfaction with the present policy.

Despite the IRS's new policy on private schools, the government is continuing its indirect subsidy of segregated private schools by granting favorable rulings to schools which hypocritically announce an open-door policy. Its announced position is that if a school's tax-exempt status is revoked, gifts or contributions made to it before the revocation will not be affected. A school already might have received its major capital gifts before adverse action is taken in Washington. Thus, on the strength of bad judgments by IRS in the initial phase, some schools that are not eligible for an exemption will have received the benefit of one at the most crucial stage of their development. While approximately 85 per cent of the private schools' operating costs can be met by tuition and other fees, funds for capital improvements are almost totally dependent upon contributions.

As a letter to the editor of the New York *Times* (August 2, 1970) suggests: "By such action these schools would be able to assure their contributors that the deductibility of their contributions would not be in question. After the buildings have been completed and the buses have been bought out of tax deductible contributions, the effect of a revocation is not harsh since the daily operating costs may be satisfied through tuition payments.

"If the administration is sincere in its aim to prevent the formation of tax-exempt segregated schools, it should ask the IRS to point out that a deliberate misrepresentation in a tax exemption application constitutes a

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crime, with a maximum penalty of a fine of $5,000 and three years imprisonment."

Effect on Public Education

While the proportion of students enrolled in all private schools in the South is still below the national average, the growth of private school enrollments in some areas has had an undermining effect on the public schools. The South, a region which traditionally has been at the bottom in virtually every aspect of public education, is again being victimized by its own racial fears. Because of the private school movement, many areas are seeing a return to separate-but-unequal education. According to the latest figures from the National Education Association, four Southern states show a significant drop in public school enrollment this year:

State	*1969/70*	*1970/71*	*Loss*
Alabama	825,072	803,507	—21,565
Louisiana	853,766	842,365	−11,401
Mississippi	575,284	534,395	−40,889
South Carolina	648,182	646,100	− 2,082

In many areas within these states the public school systems are becoming all-black. In many of these instances the school boards remain under the control of whites who are sending their children to private schools. Instances of the transfer or gift of public school property and materials to private schools have been alleged. State revenue to public schools, usually based on average daily attendance, has decreased with white flight and evidence is accumulating that local bond issues for public schools in several Southern states are being voted down because of the move to the academies.

The problem compounds itself. As black enrollment increases, achievement test scores begin to drop, reflecting centuries of educational abuse Negroes have suffered in segregated schools and a segregated society. Negro drop-out rates increase because the public school system in the South is still, generally, a white middle-class institution which does not effectively serve its new constituents. White parents became more and more reluctant to send their children to schools as the percentage of blacks in a school increases and the benefits of an integrated education are lost to all. The present institutional framework of public education is generating trouble and unless effective solutions are created, there is a grave danger that public education in many parts of the South will disintegrate.

Because the segregation academy movement is a prime factor in this depressing state of education in the region, it is imperative that all publicly-supported encouragement of segregated private schools—by tax exemptions, free lunches, etc.—be withdrawn at once. Further, to insure an educated populace for the future, minimal standards of quality should be required of all private schools for the safety and well-being of all.

BLACK STUDENTS SPEAK:

THEY'RE LOOKING TO US AS EXAMPLES

(The following is from a tape recording of a discussion by four black high school seniors who are in their first year at a fully integrated school in a small southern city. It is not necessarily representative of all problems or ranges of opinion among southern students. But it does suggest the concrete reality of a situation about which adults have done so much abstracting and generalizing. And it reflects that which in all southern young people needs only encouragement and honest adult leadership for the making of a better South and better America.)

FIRST STUDENT: You know it may not seem important to some people. But to us—you know we had been going to [all-black school] for three years—and to go to another school and lose all our identity wouldn't seem right to us. Because you know we had more pride in our school than to just go lose it. So we wanted our school colors—you know not all of them—but consolidated. We wanted part of our colors to be there, too. I mean they really sort of played our school color out. They had more of theirs than ours. They just gave a few stripes. [laughter]

SECOND STUDENT: They just had a little stripe of gold [on football uniforms]. All the rest of it was [formerly predominantly white school] colors. For them it was just like last year—only instead of having a little white stripe they had a little gold stripe.

THIRD STUDENT: Football. That's where most of the problems come from—football. The Negro students and the coaching staff—how we were treated over there. . . . They criticized our coaches—about how we played ball. Yet still we had the best players—most of the best players out there on the field were Negroes.

FOURTH STUDENT: Our head coach was assistant B-team coach and our head line coach was really assistant C-team coach and our one black coach on the varsity was—they always sent him down on the end with the leftovers. . . . The head coach [of the B-team] just started coaching this year.

THIRD STUDENT: I think they should change the whole coaching staff. As long as you have Negro players the kinds of things that happened this year will go on happening after the coach acted like he did this year.

FOURTH STUDENT: Rather than get a black head coach, they should

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get a fair head coach. Get a man that's qualified. He doesn't have to be black to be qualified. Someone who can deal with both black and white ball players.

FIRST STUDENT: Someone who would treat one player as he would treat another.

SECOND STUDENT: [The present coach] will be back next year. But I don't think he should. They should get a coach who is fair to all players.

FIRST STUDENT: What his problem is—he is the authority over there at school.

THIRD STUDENT: He runs everything.

FIRST STUDENT: What he says—he tells the principal what to do. He can tell anyone what to do over there because you know—they consider him as a god because, you know, he had a pretty good season—winning teams, you know. So he thinks everything should go his way. And the principal lets him have his way.

THIRD STUDENT: On the basketball team it seems as though to me they [white and black co-coaches] try to do half-way right. If they make a decision they try to show that both of them discussed it and made the decision together. . . . The basketball situation is a lot better than the football situation [even though the white co-coach is, in effect, in charge of both the girls' and boys' teams]. Not just because we have more black players out there—even though the black players we have out there—they are the best.

FIRST STUDENT: [A big difference in the new school situation this year] is that the higher authorities expect you to change. You know—you've been going to a black school for twelve years and they expect you to change your ways, your traditions and everything, you know—even your language. They expect you to change this in a year . . . You can change a little. But there's no reason to change totally. The teachers—they're all right. They don't try to be so rough. Just a few do.

FOURTH STUDENT: The principal and assistant principal, they'll get you in the office and the first thing they'll tell you is—you're supposed to be setting an example. You can't be with all the other black students out there. You got to walk this way. You got to talk this way. I told him one day, I'm on the student council and he going to tell me I couldn't be with those people. I told him they were the ones who elected me. For me to turn my back now—In other words they want you to be white. I mean they want me—if some trouble comes about—to tell 'em to be cool. Don't boycott. Go along with it. I know it's wrong. But go along with it. I don't believe in it.

SECOND STUDENT: They always tell us they're looking to us as examples. But we got to live with our color. They don't have to live with our color. They don't. We grew up with them. For us to go out there and change—uh-uh—ain't no way. They talk about you got to set an example. Don't do what you see everybody else doing. They want you to stay out from around ones they think cause a whole lot of trouble. We got a little

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old place out there [in front of the school]. A lot of Negroes hang out there. They don't want you to hang out there. That's a bad group. You know it's mostly hippies and Negroes hang out there in front. I been with 'em all my life. I can't change in one year. . . . If a Negro don't come to school and they happen to see him on campus, he gets suspended. They've thrown out a lot of them, and the majority was Negro. . . . The Negroes and hippies get along very well.

FIRST STUDENT: They sort of had a reason for putting [security guards] in—consolidation, integration and all. They don't bug me. The majority are white. Some people say they bug them—they try to say they're like policemen or cops or something. But I don't think it should bug them. If you don't do wrong, they don't have anything to do.

FOURTH STUDENT: You have to give it to them. Some of them go out of the way to be nice to you. One of them, white, when he sees a black person, he says, "Brother—brother . . ." You can talk to them. . . . We get along with them. Black people do. But like I say, those hippies and some of the white people, they don't like them. . . .

THIRD STUDENT: They're just trying to do a job. I think it's good to have them over there . . .

I get along with most of the white kids. In football, we got along all right. They didn't get mad or anything while we were out there on the field. But now after football season is over with—we're just like somebody who just walked onto the schoolyard. When we were football players, they thought something of us.

FIRST STUDENT: The young black students—they can get along with the young white students. The young black students, they have a rather different idea towards older white people. I mean you can't—maybe it's just a generation gap or something like that . . . But the young white students, they sort of understand some parts of how we act.

SECOND STUDENT: All the while we were playing football, all the white football players—they only spoke to Negro football players. You know, seems like there were just a few who would speak to a Negro they didn't play football with. If they would see me coming down the hall, they'd speak. But if you didn't play no football they wouldn't have nothing to do with you. Then when football season was over—don't none of 'em speak to us. It don't make me no difference but—they say we're integrated, but we are not because when you go over there, you've got the blacks in one group, you've got the hippies in one group, you've got the whites in one group. You may find a few whites and blacks together. But mostly you got the whites and hippies and blacks . . . I ain't going to die over them not talking to me—but if you're going to integrate you ought to go over there and be together on things. I try to get along with them. We went over there trying to make the thing work. We gave them a lot. We went over there, we had to go by their rules. . . .

You know we used to have dances. Well, they cut that out. We like to go to dances. [The town] is pretty dead nowadays. You don't have anywhere

to go. Now we can't have a dance because somebody's going to get to fighting. That's the first thing they bring up.

FOURTH STUDENT: If they're going to fight, they'll fight anyhow. We are over there all day—we go to school together.

THIRD STUDENT: So why shouldn't we be able to go over there to a dance? We didn't have no homecoming court or anything. We go to school all day with them. Why shouldn't we be able to socialize with them at a dance? . . .

Anything they have over there, it looks like they try to eliminate a lot of Negroes from being in it, anyway.

FIRST STUDENT: If they're going to have integration over there, seems as though they should want the blacks and whites to get together. But seems like they try to keep us apart. I don't know what they think. I guess they think we can't be together.

FOURTH STUDENT: He [the principal] argued with me about assembly programs. We were going to have a black history program and [one on] Martin Luther King's assassination. He was afraid any time we get in there together there's going to be an all-out battle. We had one program, and he was afraid Negroes and whites were going to get to fighting then. Nobody didn't get in a fight. It was just like anything else. I told him one day, "What you trying to hide? If we go fight, you might as well get it over with. Let 'em fight." He dodged around all the issues, you know. . . .

FIRST STUDENT: The school year is almost half-way over, and we haven't had even two fights over to the school yet between black and white. I mean why do they try to avoid the issue? If the blacks want to fight, they'll fight. We're just like they [whites] are. I mean they try to label us as violent and all that. We are just like they are. We have brains.

THIRD STUDENT: I think that what we did last year, going over there protesting—that helped a lot. I bet you they weren't going to change the colors and all. Because they think that Negroes, we don't think about anything. That we would just go over there and give in to what they already had over there. We had traditions just like they did.

FOURTH STUDENT: The principal admitted himself if it hadn't been for those demonstrations, they weren't going to change anything. . . .

FIRST STUDENT: You know you're not going to have many white people taking that [black history] course. I like the class myself. It reminds me of last year. When I go in there, it's mostly Negroes. Three hippies go in there. It's just like a regular [all-black school] class for me. I feel right with it. They say they don't have any class books for Negro history. . . .

THIRD STUDENT: They're doing things to bring about demonstrations over at that school.

FOURTH STUDENT: If they keep on, it's kind of like a steam pot. If you keep it on the stove the pressure builds, the top will blow off. . . . They should just show they aren't scared of us. Like they feel like we are wild, going to fight . . . . Give me a chance. They say, you know, hot weather—

we're supposed to riot and tear up in hot weather. That's the way black people are. That's what they believe, I guess. But if all along we had been having dances—you know, the more you become familiar with people the less it will be. Like going to school with them—you know, you don't notice white people too much. The first day you really noticed 'em—but now it's just common. If we had dances with 'em, it'd be common if we kept doing it.

FIRST STUDENT: I think they should have a dance and just see how it worked out with the Negroes and the whites. You can't hide from things. They going be thinking about the same thing we are right now. They're making it bad for themselves. For example—if you have a friend that's a white friend—if you made friends with him, you know and socialized with him, if something were to happen you wouldn't want to take it out on your friend—because he's a friend, too. He's just your friend. But I mean if you don't socialize with 'em or anything like that and he's just around, he may get hurt just like the rest of 'em. If you socialize, well, you know, you don't have any problems. If you're separate—like we're all-black and you're all-white—if something comes up, you don't care who gets hurt. . . .

THIRD STUDENT: When we started demonstrating, we didn't start off by going straight to violence. We went over there and tried to talk to the principal, and get a meeting going and everything. They tried to run us out.

[The most of violence that occurred in the demonstrations was by police during mass arrests. Some black students were involved in window breaking.]

FOURTH STUDENT: We had been meeting for two or three months and we couldn't find anything. No changes had been made; no attempt to make any changes had been made. . . . We tried to tell [an assistant principal] and he just ran us out. He literally ran us out from over there. After that there wasn't anything else to do but this other thing. Demonstrating worked better than talking.

FIRST STUDENT: Some people say you can't solve anything by violence. We didn't intend to solve it by violence. It wasn't going to be in a violent way but the stuff just kept building up and building up. We didn't try violence, but that's the way it turned out.

THIRD STUDENT: Like they say you can't handle things by violence, and they over there fighting in the war, trying to solve it by violence. . . You see that talking isn't getting you anywhere. You can't talk your way out of everything. You have to fight your way out sometimes. [laughter] . . .

The same thing will come about next year. They talk about building a new school. When they build a new school, they got to find a way. So why not be looking for it now. They wait 'til the last minute and then they go drop something down on your shoulders. And you're supposed to take that and go on with it. . . .

They get us and try to talk with us individually. We can't tell what everybody's going to be thinking about out there in the student body. The

principal and all have got to get the students together and talk about solving problems. They can't just get some of the folks. . . .

FOURTH STUDENT: [The principal] is not the main problem. You know I talk to him a lot. I kind of feel sorry for him really. I think he's just scared. You know, he's trying to keep his school together so the people in this community won't get on him—because, you know, they got on him last year. I told him, "You ought to face the problem," you know, but he just don't want to face the problem. He tries to stay in the middle. The middle of the road is not the best answer. . . . Do it fairly. Go on and face the problem and let it go.

FIRST STUDENT: [A black assistant principal] is a pretty good guy. He tries to work with everybody. He don't just try to work with blacks and not work with whites. He tries to work with white and black, and you know, get us all together. He's not trying to be separatist or anything like that.

FOURTH STUDENT: The situation at that school would be worse if it weren't for [the same assistant principal] because, you know, he understands. He tries to understand you and he listens to the problem. He's helping not just white and not just black; he's helping the whole student body.

THIRD STUDENT: The white students and the black students trust him more than they do anybody else over there. . . .

They try to keep dodging. . . . I don't think it'll be any better myself. You try to be friends with the whites. Now you might be a friend with some that go to classes with you. But some of 'em you can't meet—they don't get a chance to see or anything.

FOURTH STUDENT: We get along with the white students. It's just the older people. I don't know—they've got the wrong—I don't know where their ideas come from.

THIRD STUDENT: If someone started now and when it comes to the students that come behind us someone would help try to bring it along again. It would keep building up and then one day it would be all right and everyone would be human beings.

FIRST STUDENT: If they keep us separated things are going to remain the same. It's going to be just like when they first started integration if they keep us separated. But if we mingle and become more understanding toward each other, why things could be better.

SECOND STUDENT: A lot of people say if it hadn't been for the football team, for the football, with Negroes going out there and getting along with the whites, and going along with it, things would have been all messed up. The way I look at it, they're going to have to get a better coach if they going to want this thing to work out.

THIRD STUDENT: If [the present coach] had been [in an integrated situation] three years ago, he wouldn't be there today. The students that were before us wouldn't stand for this. They think that we are violent, but the students that came before us . . . would have turned it out a long time ago.

FIRST STUDENT: Time . . . time solves a whole lot, you know. The students that were before us—some of them have told us they don't want to associate with whites and they don't want whites to associate with them. But time changes. We want to, you know, get together. Things can't go just separated all the time. But then—they hadn't experienced being with whites, whites with blacks, you know. They were just apathetic. They just didn't care about nothing. We do care. We want things to go on right.

THIRD STUDENT: We was young when we first started. . . . You can't teach an old dog new tricks. When we was young, we had a chance to associate with some white teachers. They talked to us. . . .

SECOND STUDENT: They think they can tell the Negro anything and he'll go along with it. But they're wrong. These Negroes, they've got to the point where they don't want to take no more foolishness. You've been through it so long that you've done got tired of it. Don't want to take it no more. Out there on the field, when the coach hollers at us, that's the white man, he's been hollering at us all the time. . . .

FOURTH STUDENT: On a football team, you're going to get hollered at and if you deserve it. . . . I don't mind.

THIRD STUDENT: If you're black and you're not super, you don't get to play.

THIRD STUDENT: I think it's more the older whites than the younger whites. I get along with them. I've got more white friends—whites that I speak to.

FIRST STUDENT: You know my grandmother is 93 years old and you know she's kicking about pretty good. She tells me about what she used to go through, how she used to try to make a living. Compared to now, it was hard. I sort of think, you know, how could people treat people that way?

FOURTH STUDENT: You never will get total integration. You know that. But we're in there together. I figure if they'd put somebody eighteen or twenty years old in there as assistant principal and let 'em go on you know the school would be all right. People are people—I don't care. I don't say there'll be total integration. But I can live with you just as long as you'll live with me. Just like those people at school. We can live with them. We get along well with them.

FIRST STUDENT: You take a Martian and an Earthman, and they get together—you don't expect them to do the same thing. That's the way with Negroes and whites. You can't expect them to talk the same, dance the same. . . . Talk, dance, think.

THIRD STUDENT: All these things they're doing [at school]—some Negroes are looking at it. It won't take a whole group of folks to do it. If some Negroes get together and . . . . start something . . . then everybody's going to join in with it. I mean why shouldn't I help? If some Negroes get together and say, "I'm just fed up"—that's what happened over to the school last year. Everybody just started talking and the hall filled up and everything. . . . It won't be planned or anything; it'll just happen.

SECOND STUDENT: If it keeps going on like it's going now, there's going to be some trouble. If they keep ducking and dodging and going on like it is, just like the man says, it's going to get hot after awhile . . .

They're trying to hide [from] social life . . . Going out to dances and things with white people. . . .

FOURTH STUDENT: Our Negro principal [last year] is a principal now in a night school. . . . We were trying to help him. If he had stuck with us he might have been a principal or assistant principal [at the integrated school]. We would like to see our principal get a good job.

THIRD STUDENT: Like our coach. He was the head coach and has fallen back to assistant coach. . . .

FOURTH STUDENT: How does [the principal] feel now? I'd leave this town. . . Money helps. But my pride—being a man—that's what we're trying to get away from—these black men who . . . aren't men. They're "boy" you know—that's why they call them boys all the time. That's what we're getting away from. We want to be men.

FIRST STUDENT: If they don't want to talk with you, don't want to associate with you, don't want to say anything—and you go up to them and say something, and they'll walk on off. . . . That sort of gets me. I can't see why they think they are so much superior. . . .

THIRD STUDENT: Now my sister, she's real small. She probably doesn't think much about it [integration]. She's in the fifth grade. She gets along with the whites all right. They call her and she has friends. My little nephew, he brings white friends home, and he goes over there sometimes. The young folk get along all right.

FOURTH STUDENT: They've been going together all along. It's nothing new. . . .